

the thousands who are used up yearly in certain trades, in ministering to our comfort, even our very frivolities and luxuries. Sorry for the Sheffield grinders who go to work as to certain death; who count how many years they have left and say, 'A short life and a merry one, let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die.' Sorry for the people whose lower jaws decay away in lucifer match factories. Sorry for the diseases of artificial flower makers. Sorry for the boys working in glasshouses whole days and nights on end without rest, laboring in the very fire and wearing themselves for very vanity...."

W. J. Dawson, in his *Makers of English Fiction*, says that Kingsley attempted to do too many things to do them all equally well, or even to do one with entire perfection. But who shall say that his service to his own generation and to succeeding generations was less than that of some magnificent genius whose powers are concentrated upon one supreme task? Kingsley was not a great genius, but he was a great man; great because he loved men and understood men and strove with every power of his being to help men; to give them cleaner and stronger bodies, better trained minds, and to direct their souls to higher things. One of the highest tributes paid to Kingsley is found in an extract from a letter written by a student who heard him lecture at Cambridge: "Had Kingsley had to lecture upon broom-handles he would have done more good than many men would do with the most suggestive themes. His own noble, gallant, God-fearing, loving soul shone through everything, and we felt that it was good to be with him."

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 W. J. Dawson, "Makers of English Fiction."  
 Leslie Stephen, "Hours in a Library."

### A CERTAIN PRESCRIPTION.\*

BY L. E. SAYRE.

The writer feels that he need not apologize for presenting a paper on what would seem to be a very simple prescription for compounding by an experienced druggist. It is taken for granted that all observations, however trivial they may be, which are liable to be part of the experience of the drug clerk, let us say, would be acceptable for discussion in this Section.

The prescription, that I desire to discuss is the following:

Elix. Terpin. Hyd. et Heroinae.....	℥ i
Syr. Acidi Hydriodici.....	℥ ii
Aspirin.....	gr. 55
Atropinae Sulphatis.....	gr. 1/35
Acaciae.....	℥ ii
Creosot. Carb.....	gtts. 30
Aquae Cinnamomi, q. s. ad.....	℥ iv
M. Fiat sol.	
Sig. ℥ i every 3 or 4 hours.	

This prescription was compounded by various pharmacists in one of our largest western cities and pronounced unsatisfactory by the physician until it fell into the

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hands of a somewhat experienced clerk who had been trained in pharmaceutical dispensing, but by no means an expert dispenser. In fact he was still a student in pharmacy. When this prescription was presented to the latter, complaint was made that formerly it had not been satisfactorily compounded by druggists and he was asked to improve the compounding of it, if possible. In order to make a presentable and satisfactory mixture and to bring the ingredients into a form and condition that would meet the demand of the prescriber, it seemed necessary to suspend the insoluble ingredients by producing an emulsion. To do this, however, it was necessary to add a comparatively inert oil (almond oil), which did not appear written in the prescription. It may be said in passing that a solution (as directed by the prescriber) would not be possible.

The question arose on the part of the druggist as well as some physicians, whether it was permissible for a pharmacist, in any way, to modify a prescription by adding an ingredient to a mixture, or taking one away. Aside from the question of the rational therapeutics involved, which it may not behoove the pharmacist to discuss, and aside from any other possible merit, there is involved in this—the question of the prerogative of the pharmacist in practical prescription compounding—whether any deviation from the written directions is justifiable and possibly legal.

It is, doubtless, well known that the best authorities take the position that the pharmacist is justified in leaving out an ingredient which has no decided medicinal value in the mixture and which may, if added, cause trouble or produce incompatibility. It is unnecessary to say that in the case referred to I had no question as to the advisability and of the prerogative of the druggist in adding such a comparatively inert ingredient as oil of almond if it should improve in any, even slight, degree the physical characters of the prescription dispensed. As I have said before, the expert pharmacist would consider that such an addition as is here made and the principles which are advocated herewith are so well known as to need no explanation before this body, but in the writer's opinion, it cannot be too frequently reiterated that the druggist should have and should claim to have certain rights and privileges in compounding such a prescription as herein presented.

One of our pharmaceutical writers gives an illustration of where the pharmacist is justified in eliminating from a prescription objectionable ingredients, ingredients which have no decided medicinal value. The following mixture is well known, frequently quoted and worthy of repetition:

Quininae Sulphatis .....	℥ ii
Acidi Sulphurici Dilut.....	℥ i
Fluidext. Glycyrrhizae .....	℥ ss
Syrupi .....	℥ i
Aquae destillatae q. s. ut ft.....	℥ iv—M.

The comments made on this are as follows:

“Here the diluted sulphuric acid is ordered to dissolve the quinine sulphate and the fluidextract of licorice to cover its intense bitterness (being one of the best of agents for this purpose), but the prescriber has overlooked the fact that acids will precipitate the glycyrrhizin in the fluidextract of licorice, the real flavoring principle of the root, and thus the very object which he is seeking, a clear and palatable mixture, will be defeated. To omit the acid is the only remedy for this. The

quinine sulphate may be diffused through the mixture, and the licorice will then mask its bitterness. Dispense with a shake-label."

Here, it will be noted, is a more important ingredient omitted, resulting in a less acid solution, and a more assimilable quinine mixture.

I have not said anything with regard to the first prescription. A pharmacist certainly dislikes to criticize a physician's prescription. It is somewhat out of place to do that, but I might venture to state that physicians should be aware that in a solution of this kind they should not expect the therapeutic action of aspirin. A very short time after the combination is made the acetyl salicylic acid breaks down into its elementary portions and salicylic acid is evidenced by the ferric chloride test. It would seem to the writer, if the effect of aspirin is desired, that crystals, or capsules, or tablets should be administered. Aqueous solutions such as the above are sure to decompose and the therapeutic results are not as would naturally be anticipated by the prescriber. I should incidentally call attention to a lesson which this prescription teaches, namely, that the profession of Pharmacy is derelict in its duty to the public unless it seeks in every legitimate way to impress upon the members of the medical profession the need of a highly trained pharmacist to teach materia medica and prescription incompatibility and compounding in every one of our medical schools. The drug nihilism that is now so rampant among a few young and clinically inexperienced experimental pharmacologists who style themselves as highly scientific should, in the interests of sane medical practice, be checkmated and vigorously opposed. Prescription compounding in their hands would become a lost art.

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### LIQUID DENTIFRICE.

(Formula proposed by Leo G. Penn, Philadelphia, for inclusion in the National Formulary.)

#### FORMULA:

Guaiacum Wood.....	
Cinnamon.....	
Star-Anise, of each.....	1½ ounces
Cloves.....	½ ounce
Cochineal.....	40 grains
Oil of Peppermint.....	30 minims
Oil of Lemon.....	10 minims
Alcohol, 65% to make 16 fluidounces.	

Quantities are given in apothecaries' weights and measures. The drugs are to be ground to a No. 40 powder, and macerated in the alcohol for six (6) days; the oils are then added, and the liquid filtered, using talcum as a medium.

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