

FILLING CAPSULES—A SUGGESTION.

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Anyone who has been called upon to fill into capsules dry powders realizes the difficulty that one experiences when endeavoring to place large amounts of bulky medicines, such as Cinchonidia Salicylate, in a small-sized capsule, and this can readily be demonstrated by the trouble one encounters when ten grains of this chemical is directed to be dispensed in the smallest-sized capsule possible to contain it.

The commonplace method of filling capsules with medicines in a dry state consists of forcing the powder into the two ends of the empty capsule by repeated plunging of the halves of the capsule into the powder, and then trying to force the two portions together, which oftentimes results in the ends of the capsule being crushed in, due to the condition of the powder therein contained.

By proceeding as has been customary to fill the two ends of the capsule, and placing them together with gentle twisting thereof, so that the two ends overlap somewhat, we are ready to utilize the suggestion here offered as follows:—Place the capsule between the thumb and forefinger of one hand, the ends of the capsule being the portions of the same in contact with one's body, then proceed to rotate the capsule with the forefinger and thumb of the other hand, pressing upon the body of the capsule to as great an extent as is allowable, whilst rotating it, which results in the powder being forced into the remotest portions of the capsule's ends, displacing the air that had been confined therein by the previous method of forcing the powder into the confined space, thereby fortifying the film of gelatiné that constitutes the ends of the finished capsule, so that greater pressure can be placed thereon from outside without danger of crushing in the end.

Assuredly, as the space occupied by the undesired air is now filled with powder, more of the latter can be placed therein, or the space occupied by the former amount of medicine will be less than it was before the capsule was subjected to the proposed treatment.

It is really surprising how much one can reduce the bulk of a powder when resorting to this method of filling capsules therewith in a dry state.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. Apple illustrated his method of filling capsules. In order to remove the objection to the capsule coming in contact with moist fingers, he suggested covering the fingers at points of contact with court-plaster.

The Chairman said that the paper demonstrated how many little points there were in the practice of Pharmacy that were helpful and of value to every one. It was seldom that these little things were thought of enough importance and value to be brought out in a paper.

Prof. Hynson asked Mr. Apple if the substances used were always powdered, before filling the capsules, and was informed that the writer always dispensed the powder in a fine state of sub-division. Another question by the same gentleman was, as to the amount of powder he placed in the capsule. Mr. Apple said that he filled the capsules with just as much powder as he could get into each end. Mr. Hynson queried whether, if the capsules are filled by the powder, so that the tap will not occupy the place it did on the empty capsules, if Mr. Apple would dispense them that way? Mr. Apple replied that he could always force the capsule together so that it was entirely closed. Mr. Hynson said that he had noticed that some dispensers would use, for instance, a No. 2 capsule, and after filling would dispense it of the same length as a No. 1. He wished to ascertain as to the general practice regarding this matter.