

A GOOD FINISH FOR PRESCRIPTION AND LABORATORY TABLE
TOPS.*

F. W. NITARDY.

The prescription case or laboratory table top cannot be satisfactorily finished by the usual methods. Too many things that affect or destroy the average finish, are likely to be spilled upon them and sooner or later the top becomes unsightly. Some fixture-manufacturers furnish these tops without any finish whatever, but these offer no particular advantage as they soon become stained and no amount of scrubbing will keep them sightly.

While serving my apprenticeship in a country town in southern Minnesota, the firm invested in new fixtures and the prescription-case came with an unfinished top. My preceptor, Mr. John B. Christgau, applied a chemical which proved very satisfactory. It did not discolor nor was it in any way affected by acids, alkalis, or alcoholic liquids, etc., that might be spilled on it, and it looked as good after 10 years service as it did when first finished.

I have used this finish extensively since and found it equally satisfactory, but as I have not seen it used by others, nor its formula in print, I feel that it might bear publication, in view of its very serviceable and practical character. It may be used on new or on old finished surfaces, providing in the latter case, the wood is freed from the old finish by varnish-remover or other means.

To apply the finish proceed as follows:

Thoroughly clean the wood by scrubbing with soap and water. Allow it to dry.

Prepare a saturated solution of potassium chlorate, heat to boiling, and apply to the wood while hot, so that it will penetrate the fibre. When dry, apply a second coat, in the same manner. Now prepare a 20% solution of copper sulphate and apply boiling-hot, after the former has dried, allowing the wood to become well saturated and taking up any surplus liquid remaining after 10 to 15 minutes, so that no appreciable crystalization takes place on top of the wood.

When this is dry, apply a solution made by dissolving 90 parts by volume of aniline oil in 60 parts by volume of hydrochloric acid, diluted to 500 parts with water, and allow that to well penetrate the wood. Let this coat dry about six hours or over night, then apply a heavy coat of hot, raw, linseed oil. Allow to stand six hours or over night and scrub well with soap and water until all surplus color has been removed, that is until the water stays clean, now allow to dry and rub down well with linseed oil, applying several coats (a day or two apart) if necessary to completely fill the pores of the wood.

This gives a deep-black finish, with a slight gloss, which can be kept in perfect condition by an occasional scrubbing with soap and water and a subsequent rub-down with linseed oil.

The finish will not affect wood covered with oil, wax, varnish, or other substances, that do not permit the penetration of aqueous solutions, but will to a cer-

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tain extent stain a light colored finish, especially white enamel, so care should be used in its application lest one might discolor adjoining woodwork.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. Raubenheimer expressed the opinion that this was a good thing, and he knew of one of the teachers in his school who used this process.

Mr. Becker called attention to the fact that a similar formula was published a few years ago by Bausch and Lomb, in the *Journal of Applied Microscopy and Laboratory Methods*, the title of the paper being "An Acid-Proof Table-Top," by Pierre A. Fish, New York State Veterinary College, Vol. VI, No. 3, March, 1903, pages 2211 and 2212.

Mr. Dunning said if the discussion of glass counters was in order he would like to say that in his establishment they had not had the most satisfactory experience with them. They were a most excellent medium for breaking glass things, as they had no elasticity. They had remodeled their main store, and put in solid mahogany, unvarnished counter-tops.

Mr. Wilbert suggested that if the pharmacist would take an ordinary pine board and saturate it with paraffin he would find it would make a fine table-top.

LIQUOR MAGNESII CITRATIS.

J. LEE BROWN, PH. G.

So much has been written about Solution of Magnesium Citrate that one would think the last word had been said on the subject, yet its preparation still continues to be a source of trouble to many pharmacists. A great many formulæ and modifications of the U. S. P. process have been proposed, so I take the liberty of presenting a method that has proven entirely satisfactory in my experience for many years, and that has made "citrate" one of our best sellers. I use the U. S. P. formula with a few modifications as follows:—

Magnesium Carbonate U. S. P.	180 gm.
Citric Acid	396 gm.
Syrup	720 cc.
Spirit of Lemon	10 cc.
Potassium Bicarb.	12—2.5 gm. Tablets
Water to make 12 bottles of solution.	

Place the magnesium carbonate in an aluminum vessel of about 4 L. capacity which contains about 2 L. of water. Now add the citric acid. Let stand till effervescence ceases and complete solution results. Place the vessel containing the solution, on an open flame and raise to the boiling point and allow to boil a few moments. Add the spirit of lemon and filter while hot through a well-wetted white filter, contained in an aluminum funnel. When the solution has all passed, wash the filter by passing about a pint of boiling water through it. Now add the syrup and divide the liquid accurately between twelve patent-stoppered citrate bottles. Fill the bottles nearly full with water, drop in each a 2.5 gm. tablet of potassium bicarbonate and stopper immediately. I have found it unnecessary to use distilled water, as the water in my locality is almost entirely free from any mineral contamination or organic impurities. The whole process can be completed in a short time, with very little attention. Filtering at