

Section on Practical Pharmacy and Dispensing

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A NEW COLOR FOR USE IN PHARMACEUTICAL AND TOILET PREPARATIONS.

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While recently making some experiments with different harmless coloring agents for use in toilet preparations, such as tooth washes, antiseptic solutions, etc., I made use of one which has an extended and increasing employment in food products and confectionery, but which is practically unknown in pharmacy, so far as I have been able to learn, and as it would seem to merit consideration for such purposes I wish to bring it before the members of this Section.

The name of this color is sulphonated orchil or archil (sometimes called orcin), but in the trades where it is usually employed it is sold under the vague and somewhat misleading name of "Vegetable Red."

Archil is a particular form of the coloring matter derived by the ammoniacal fermentation of certain species of lichens of the genera *Rocella* and *Lecanora*, and probably several others. Prepared in paste form from the foregoing sources the color is known as archil. When it occurs in a somewhat drier condition it is known as persis. In the dry powdered form it is known as cudbear, and this is the form which is most largely known and used in pharmacy. It is an interesting fact, unknown to most pharmacists, that litmus is produced from the same source by adding potassium or sodium carbonate during the fermentation.

The paste archil, when in the unmodified form, has about the same coloring properties as cudbear, but it has been found that by sulphonating it a modification is produced which is very much more effective and satisfactory as a coloring agent. This sulphonation, however, removes it from the class of purely vegetable compounds, and according to some authorities, the presence of the sulphonated color must be declared the same as a coal tar color.

It produces about the same shades and is subject to about the same changes in acid and alkaline media, as cudbear, with the noteworthy difference that it appears to be much more permanent. For instance, an alkaline antiseptic solution, colored with cudbear, when mixed with solution of hydrogen dioxide solution, becomes decolorized in a very short time, while if sulphonated orcin is used to produce the color, the latter is scarcely affected by solution of hydrogen dioxide, even after twenty-four hours' standing.

For private formulas and unofficial preparations, therefore, it may prove to be of value. The cost of the article is the only disadvantage, as it costs from \$4 to

\$5 per pound, while having little or no higher coloring power than cudbear; its advantage over that color being its greater permanence.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. C. M. Ford stated that every pharmacist is disgusted with cudbear as a coloring agent because of its varying quality. About the only way he can secure uniformity is by buying a large quantity and keep using from that supply. When he gets a new supply he must experiment to get the color he wants. The cudbear obtained from one source will differ greatly from that obtained from another.

Mr. Raubenheimer said that he and Mr. Gardner had a paper on the same subject which they hoped to present at the next session.

In a prescription calling for one ounce of hydrogen peroxide solution and three ounces of alkaline antiseptic solution, he found it did not bleach.

The process he used for making the antiseptic solution was the excellent process which will probably be adopted in the next edition of the N. F., namely, to macerate 2 gm. of cudbear in 1000 cc. of the solution.

Hydrogen peroxide solution in the proportion of 1 to 3 does not bleach the red color of the alkaline antiseptic prepared in this way.

Mr. Sass said that alkaline antiseptic solution made with the tincture would, after standing for some time, become lighter in color and form a white precipitate in the bottom. If the solution be macerated with 1½ gm. of powdered cudbear for six days the color would remain indefinitely.

Mr. Cook stated that orcein had been used by him very satisfactorily, but was very expensive, though only a trace was needed to give sufficient color.

The Committee on National Formulary had been experimenting with color standards and would adopt the expedient of using powdered cudbear with maceration.

THE MODERN SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS.

The educational system of today is a monumental institution dedicated to Hurry. The children are forced to go through a series of studies that sweep the circle of all human wisdom. They are given everything that the ambitious ignorance of the age can force into their minds; they are taught everything but the essentials,—how to use their senses and how to think. Their minds become congested by a great mass of undigested facts, and still the cruel, barbarous forcing goes on. You watch it until it seems you cannot stand it a moment longer, and you instinctively put out your hand and say: "Stop! This modern slaughter of the innocents must *not* go on!" Education smiles suavely, waves her hand complacently towards her thousands of knowledge-prisons over the country, and says: "Who are you that dares speak a word against our sacred school system?" Education is in a hurry. Because she fails in fifteen years to do what half the time should accomplish by better methods, she should not be too boastful. Incompetence is not always a reason for pride. And they hurry the children into a hundred text-books, then into ill-health, then into the colleges, then into a diploma, then into life,—with a dazed mind, untrained and unfitted for the real duties of living.—*William George Jordan.*