

cooler, pipes, draft arms, etc. These would last longer than an average lifetime, as no polishing would be required after the first factory polishing; none of the acids, organic or inorganic, which are used at soda fountains have any appreciable effect upon it. If such a fountain should cost a thousand dollars more than the one containing brass, silver, block tin, etc., the cost of labor in daily polishing would soon make up such extra cost and there would be no repairs necessary.

The metal parts of balances and weights could be made from this metal, which remains permanently bright.

Spatulas of some varieties of stainless steel on the market have changed color while in stock in the wholesale drug houses; this is probably due to improper heat treatment, or the use of an alloy unsuited to such purpose.

Ointment boxes, suppository moulds, tablet triturate moulds, large and small pans, retort stands and rings and, in fact, practically all utensils now used which are made of iron, tin, aluminum, brass, steel, etc., could be replaced by stainless steel. Citric and lactic acids, in all concentrations, have no effect upon it. Phenol, salicylic acid, mercuric oxide, ammoniated mercury, concentrated ammonium sulphide are not affected nor do they act upon the metal. Saturated solution of mercuric chloride and tincture of iodine will react, producing marks which can be removed.¹ Wire may be imbedded in glass in a similar manner to platinum.

ABSTRACT OF DISCUSSION.

The author was asked relative to the price of the alloy. He was not informed, but stated that the price was about the same as that of aluminum. Asked whether the alloy was attacked by the mercury in mercurial ointment, reference being made to its manufacture into ointment boxes, the author replied in the negative.

MIXTUM COMPOSITUM.*

BY OTTO RAUBENHEIMER.

Mixtum Compositum, a medley, a chaos, a mischmasch, an "everything together," is the named used in pharmaceutical parlance, at least in my store, for a polypharmaceutical mixture, especially such a one as contains one or more incompatibilities. The subject of incompatibilities should be given much more attention in colleges and at pharmaceutical meetings. In his daily routine a good prescription pharmacist has quite a number to deal with. From the abundance of incompatible prescriptions at my disposal I have thus far compiled a number of files for two colleges, namely, the prescription department of the University of the State of New Jersey and the New Jersey College of Pharmacy. From that supply I also started the Department of Prescription Difficulties in *The Practical Druggist* in 1912. Still they are coming, and I will select at least one, perhaps the worst of the lot, the one containing the most ingredients and the most incompatibilities, for discussion at the Section of Practical Pharmacy and Dispensing—the Section for the retail pharmacist. Here is the Mixtum Compositum:

¹ Specimens were submitted by the author—they had all been subjected to acids and alkalies and many reagents; a stained piece showed the effect of mercuric chloride, as stated in the last paragraph of the paper.

* Read before Section on Practical Pharmacy and Dispensing, A. Ph. A., Cleveland meeting, 1922.

℞	Tinct. Digital.		
	Tinct. Nux Vom.		
	Flex. Cascara	aa	ʒ ii
	Tinct. Cinch. Co.		
	Tinct. Gentian Co.		
	Essent. Pepsin	aa	ʒ iv
	Mist Rhei et Sod.		ʒ ii
	Elix. I. Q. & S.	q. s. ad	ʒ vi

Verily polypharmacial! This 6-ounce mixture contains 8 preparations or 26 single ingredients. Surely if one of these fails to help, one of the many others may do some good. This prescription contains at least two chief incompatibilities, besides a number of less important ones.

1. The iron citrochloride in the elixir will form black iron tannate (ink) with the tannin containing tinctures and rhubarb and soda mixture. Be it remembered that the tannin in compound tincture of gentian is not due to the gentian but to the bitter orange peel and cardamom seed.

2. The acid fluidextract, tinctures, elixir, and quite especially the acid essence of pepsin cause a lively evolution of CO₂ with the sodium bicarbonate in the rhubarb and soda mixture. This must be allowed to escape. As a further precaution it is advisable to dispense this 6-ounce mixture in an 8-ounce bottle, so as to allow room for the evolved gas.

Is there any method or manipulation whereby these incompatibilities can be avoided without altering the therapeutic action of the medicine? In my opinion there is none. I had occasion to compound this prescription about 25 times, being renewed that often, but found it was immaterial how the ingredients were mixed together. The result was always the same, namely, iron tannate and CO₂.

Of course it is understood that such a "Mixtum Compositum" is to be dispensed with a "Shake Well" label. The student or somewhat inexperienced pharmacist need not worry about such incompatibilities.

Fortunately, very fortunately, such polypharmacial and incompatible prescriptions are gradually disappearing in the up-to-date medical practice.

THE USE OF AN INDICATOR IN THE COMPOUNDING OF A POWDER PRESCRIPTION.

BY CHARLES A. GREENSTONE.

Does there seem any good reason why an indicator should not be used in the compounding of a prescription containing all white powders? Does there seem any good reason why an indicator, under these circumstances, should not be made use of just as one is used in a chemical analysis? Does the thought seem worthy of consideration? If so, let me briefly report on the results of some of my investigations.

Powders may be prescribed in the form of chartulae, capsules, or in bulk. The indicator used in chemistry shows when the solution has been titrated sufficiently, whereas the one used in pharmacy demonstrates when the powders have been intimately mixed. In either case, the indicator is a "means to an end" and as such is indispensable.