

formula of official strength ointment, and enough water to make 100 Gm. of the product. The water content ranged from 100 per cent to 300 per cent. About 50 per cent of these showed no loss of water over a period of 25 days at room temperature even during summer heat. Several showed loss of water within a few days.

#### CONCLUSIONS

These observations have led us to conclude that ointments prepared with water-absorption bases containing fairly high amounts of water are sensitive to temperature changes. For this reason we believe that hydrophile ointment bases are much less suited to stock ointments than to those for extemporaneous use.

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## Book Reviews

*The Squibb Ancient Pharmacy*, by GEORGE URDANG and F. W. NITARDY. 190 pages, 4 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 7. E. R. Squibb & Sons, New York, 1940. Price, \$1.00.

This little volume is a catalog of a European collection of old drug jars, mortars, utensils, furnishings and apothecary shop fixtures, acquired by E. R. Squibb & Sons of New York in 1932. This collection is housed in two rooms on the 28th floor of the Squibb Building at 58th Street and Fifth Avenue, New York. The rooms are designed in the style of an old apothecary shop and are open to inspection by pharmacists and other interested persons. The catalog gives detailed descriptions of the old faience ware, glassware, mortars, pictures, books and documents. The text is well illustrated and contains many historical data which should be of interest to all pharmacists who take pride in their calling.—A. G. D.

*The Homeopathic Pharmacopœia of the United States*. Published under the direction of the Committee on Pharmacopœia of the American Institute of Homeopathy. Fifth Edition, revised, price, \$6.00. First Supplement, 50¢. The publications may be purchased from Boericke & Tafel, Homeopathic Pharmacists.

The Homeopathic Pharmacopœia is one of the books on drug standards named in the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. It deals with the drugs and medicines used by the homeopathic practitioners and is prepared by the Committee on Pharmacopœia of the American Institute of Homeopathy and collaborators. The present members of the committee are T. H. Carmichael, M.D., Chairman; G. W. Boericke, M.D.; H. S. Nicholson,

M.D.; J. S. Stewart, M.D.; F. F. Massey, M.D. In addition to listing standards for drugs and medicines used in homeopathic practice, the volume also gives information relative to their botany, chemistry, pharmacy and pharmacology, also the preparation of dilutions and dosages. Pharmacists who are called upon to fill homeopathic prescriptions should provide themselves with the revised edition of this Pharmacopœia as homeopathic preparations must conform to the standards provided thereby.—E. G. E.

A reprint of *German Medicinal Plants, No. 8, 1938*. A contribution to the knowledge of the drug, *Herba Lobelia*, and requirements for its cultivation by DR. ISE ESDORN, from the Institute of Applied Botany, Hamburg.

The method of cultivation of lobelia is described—the flowering time in Germany is July to August and the harvesting season is near the end of the flowering time. The author states that the cultivation presents no great difficulties and the market price of the drug is satisfactory. The roots and seeds are described, also methods of analysis. The alkaloidal strength of the dried drug decreases some on storage—it dropped from 0.36% to 0.34% in six months.—E. G. E.

*Argyria—the Pharmacology of Silver*. By WILLIAM R. HILL, M.D., Instructor in Dermatology and Syphilology, University of Pennsylvania, and DONALD M. PILLSBURG, M.A., Associate Professor of Dermatology and Syphilology. Published November 1939 by Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore. Price, \$2.50, bound in cloth.

“The study of the pharmacology of silver in relation to the problem of argyria has been carried out

at the instance of Lawrence Addicks for the American Silver Producers' Research Project under a Fellowship established in the Department of Dermatology and Syphilology of the University of Pennsylvania"—quoted from the preface. The preface states the primary purpose to be a review of the literature of the subject in an attempt to formulate conclusions concerning the incidence of argyria. The source material has been studied and, with few exceptions, the authors have been able to consult the original papers. The subject matter is presented in nine chapters of more than 160 pages. Chapter I is devoted to history of silver pharmacology. The term "argyria" according to the authors was, probably, first employed by C. H. Fuchs, Göttingen, and "argyrosis," indicating pigmentation of the eye by silver, was first investigated by E. Junge (*Graefes Arch.*, 5 (1857), 197). The bibliography contains six hundred titles; the authors' index has about the same number of titles and there is a corresponding subject index; a list of nearly one hundred names is required for the Proprietary Silver Compounds, and a bibliography of seventeen references. All of these are helpful for library research and other studies on the subject. The chapters on absorption, transportation and excretion of silver; the deposition of silver in the tissues; pharmaco-physiologic effects of silver administration; diagnosis and treatment of argyria; analysis of reported cases of argyria; production and prevention of argyria; argyria of the eye (argyrosis); and industrial argyria complete the interesting discussions.—E. G. E.

*Clinical Toxicology*, by CLINTON H. THIENES, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Pharmacology, School of Medicine, University of Southern California, Los Angeles; Attending Pathologist (Toxicology), Los Angeles County Hospital. Flexible binding, 309 pages, 5 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 8. Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger, 1940. Price, \$3.50.

This concise little treatise is intended as a classroom textbook and as a guide for the practicing physician and toxicologist. Only such chemistry, pharmacology and pharmacy are given as are required for the understanding of the toxicology of the materials considered. Full descriptions of poisons are limited to those which most frequently give rise to distressing symptoms or death and to those which serve to typify a group of poisons. Poisons are classified according to their major toxic actions rather than to their positions in the alphabet or their chemical classifications. This is done in order to facilitate diagnosis and treatment. Where a poison has an action on more than one physiological system, it is mentioned under more than one heading. Chemical tests which give the best reactions for identification are described and some biological tests are also included. The treatment of cases of poisoning is described from the point of view of pharmacology and pathology. There are nine sec-

tions in the book. The first six are devoted to the toxicology of the following classes of poisons: convulsant poisons, central nervous system depressants, peripherally acting nerve poisons, muscle poisons, protoplasmic poisons and poisons of the blood and hematopoietic organs. The remaining three sections deal with treatment and include an outline of symptom diagnosis and chemical diagnosis of poisoning.—A. G. D.

The Association has received a dissertation from the author on *Fluoreszen Mikroskopische Untersuchungen an Rindenpulvern unter Zuhilfsnahme von Reagenzien* (Fluorescent Microscopical Investigation of Powdered Barks with the Aid of Reagents)—a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Ph.D. degree at the University of Basel by IRMA STEINER, Apothecary, fem., in Canton Solothurn, Switzerland. Publisher Julius Henburger, Basel; dedicated to the author's parents.

In the special part of the work which follows the Introduction and the General Discussions, the characteristics of twenty-five powdered barks are described in detail. Using the first bark of the list, Angostura bark, *e. g.*, the different structures comprising the bark are described and the color reactions with reagents are defined. The latter do not differ greatly from those described in the Bulletins of the National Formulary which have been carefully systematized and to which reference can be made. The author concludes her work by listing the drugs of her research and has prepared a useful table in which the reagents are tabulated and also the color designations.—E. G. E.

*Text Book of Pharmacognosy*, by GEORGE EDWARD TREASE. 3rd ed., x + 739 pages, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ . Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1939. Price, \$6.00.

This is the third edition of the well-known text by this author, who is lecturer on pharmacognosy in the University College of Nottingham, England. The first chapters are devoted to a historical account of the commerce in drugs and include a description of the drug auctions conducted under the Port of London Authority. There are also chapters on the collection and cultivation of drugs, insects attacking drugs, plant principles and enzymes. Part II deals with the structure of plants and the microscopy of drugs. Part III contains a classification of vegetable drugs according to their taxonomic position. Part IV deals with drugs of animal origin and contains a summary of the various methods of drug analysis. The book is well illustrated and the format is good. It differs from the other books in this field in that greater attention is given to the commerce in drugs, such features as packing, grades and prices being discussed. The book should be in the library of every pharmacist.—A. G. D.