

Section on Pharmacopœias and Formularies

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PHARMACOPŒIAL TITLES FOR NEW REMEDIES.

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A review of the now existing national pharmacopœias suggests the thought that from the point of view of nomenclature the several books may be classified as following either the English, French, Scandinavian or German system and that apart from adhering more or less closely to the general style that has been in the prototype, little or no attempt has as yet been made to secure any degree of international uniformity in the accepted title for official articles.

The greatest amount of variation is of course to be found in connection with the official names for chemical substances, and using these names as the basis for the classification, we find that broadly speaking, the English style is followed only in the British Pharmacopœia and in the Pharmacopœia of the United States. The French system gives precedence to the vernacular title and uses the Latin only as a secondary title, usually for chemical substances and galencial preparations that are prescribed by physicians. Vernacular titles occur in the French, Spanish and Italian Pharmacopœias. The Scandinavian style, which it may be here pointed out, is based on an understanding between representatives of the Scandinavian countries, still adheres closely to the Berzelian system of nomenclature, giving precedence to the acidic radical in salts. This system is followed rather closely in the Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and Dutch Pharmacopœias, in the Latin titles of the Spanish and Italian Pharmacopœias and in the Latin synonyms of the Belgian Pharmacopœia. The German system so well known to us through the German Pharmacopœia is also included in the Swiss, Russian, Belgian, Austrian, Hungarian, Servian and Japanese Pharmacopœias, in the Latin titles of the French Pharmacopœia and the synonyms of the Danish Pharmacopœia.

The possible mistaking of the name for a comparatively innocuous substance for that of a much more active one has been repeatedly cited as an argument for greater uniformity. In this connection it will suffice to call attention to the Continental "chloratum," which in English speaking countries has not infrequently been mistaken for chlorate in place of chloride.

The exceptional titles for widely used chemical substances occur almost exclusively in the American and the British Pharmacopœias, which have uniformly adopted potassium and sodium for the universally used kalium and natrium despite the fact that kalium and natrium are thoroughly well established as designations for the elements themselves in connection with the symbols for atomic

weights. A somewhat similar exception occurs in the Russian Pharmacopœia where "magnium" is used in place of magnesium.

The obstacles in the way of international uniformity in pharmacopœial nomenclature are not so many and so varied as one would expect from the truly provincial system of pharmacopœial revision that has generally prevailed up to recent years. With a modernization of the pharmacopœias still adhering to the Berzelian system of nomenclature and sundry slight changes on the part of the Pharmacopœias of the United States and of Great Britain, the nomenclature of chemical substances, of pharmacopœial preparations and of practically all drugs could be readily made uniform and even at the present time this uniformity could be obtained for all practical purposes if the revisers of these several pharmacopœias would adopt the precedent established by the Committee of Revision of the Danish Pharmacopœia and include the most widely used official titles as synonyms.

A rather more difficult problem is, however, presented by the official recognition of some of the newer chemical remedies, particularly those of foreign manufacture which have been given short and catchy titles by the manufacturers. These titles, in some countries, at least, are accepted as property and protected by law, while in other countries, our own for example, where the law does not provide for such protection, the general adoption of the names has been prevented by fear of legal difficulties.

Some idea of the complications existing at the present time may be gathered from the following enumeration of the titles under which three widely used articles have been included in foreign pharmacopœias:

Theobromine Sodium Salicylate—

Theobrominum Natrio-salicylicum, Austr., Belg., Japan.

Theobromino-Natrium salicylicum, Germ., Helv.

Salicylas natrico-theobromicus, Dan.

Salicylas natricum cum Theobromino-Natrio, Ndl.

Salicylas sodæ et theobrominæ, Hisp.

Theobromino-salicylas natricus, Svec.

Diuretin (as a synonym), Austr., Belg., Dan., Svec., Ital., Hisp.

Epinephrine—

Adrenalinum, Fr., Helv., Ital., Belg.

Suprarenin hydrochloricum, Germ.

Suprareninum, Ndl. (Suppl.)

Aspirin—

Acidum acetylosalicylicum, Helv., Germ.

Acidum acetylo-salicylicum, Dan.

Acidum Acetylsalicylicum, Fr.

Acidum acetsalicylicum, Japan.

Aspirin, As a synonym in Germ.

In the U. S. P. VIII an attempt was made to include some of the newer remedies under abbreviated titles. The following list gives the titles under which several of these articles have been included in our own and in foreign pharma-

copœias and it is rather interesting to note that with the single exception of acetphenetidin, not any of the abbreviated names have as yet found favor with other pharmacopœial revisers:

Acetphenetidinum—

Phenacetinum, Germ., Brit., Ndl., Japan., Belg., Dan., Helv., Svec., Hung., Fr., Russ., and as a synonym in Austr., Serb.

Fenacetina, Hisp., Ital.

Acetphenetidinum, Austr., Serb.

Hexamethylenamina—

Hexamethylenetetraminum, Germ., Ndl., Japan., Dan., Helv., Svec., Ital.

Utropin (as a synonym), Germ., Ndl., Dan., Ital.

Sulphonethylmethanum—

Trionalum, Austr., Svec., Fr., Ital., Hung., and as a synonym in Ndl. and Belg.

Methylsulfonalum, Germ., Ndl., Belg.

Methyl Sulfonalum, Japan.

Sulphonmethanum—

Sulfonalum, Germ., Hisp., Ndl., Japan., Belg., Austr., Dan., Helv., Svec., Fr., Serb., Ital., Hung., Russ.

Sulphonal, Brit.

A rather significant indication of the lack of popularity that has been developed by these abbreviated titles is suggested by a review of the *Index Medicus* for the years 1905-1912, inclusive. This publication, as is well known, reflects in a rather comprehensive way the medical literature of the world and a careful search through the index of the publication fails to show a single occurrence of the words acetphenetidin, sulphonethylmethane and sulphonmethane, despite the fact that phenacetin, trional and sulphonal occur repeatedly. Urotropin and some of the other proprietary names for hexamethylenetetramine also occur in all of the several volumes, though hexamethylene does not occur at all in the volumes previous to 1908. In the latter year, owing no doubt to the inclusion of the drug as hexamethylenetetramine in a number of European pharmacopœias, the name occurs in connection with the title for one paper and re-occurs in several succeeding years, but very sparingly.

The ointment bases of the Pharmacopœia appear to offer rather a difficult problem from the American point of view, largely perhaps because of the fact that succeeding committees of revision have been unwilling to undertake a possible legal controversy in regard to proprietorship in name. Designed as our laws are to protect the interests of the many against the usurpations of the few, it would appear to be a comparatively simple procedure to have the legal rights of the people at large adequately defined either by statute or by court decisions. Trade-mark registration in this country involves no recognition of property right and is at best but a record of claim to ownership. The present law obviously restricts the right of ownership in a trade-mark to a designation of the brand of a particular product made by a manufacturer and this mark or designation must be apart from the title under which the article is known or sold. The following names for widely used ointment bases illustrate the difficulties that have

been encountered with the problems abroad and also suggest the desirability of proper inquiry as to the validity of existing trade-marks in this country.

Adeps Lanæ Hydrosus—

Adeps lanæ cum aqua—Germ. IV, Ndl., Japan., Dan., Russ., Fr., and as a synonym in Belg., Helv.

Lanolinum—Helv., Svec., Germ. V, Ital., and as a synonym in Ndl., Austr., and Dan.

Adeps lanæ hydrosus—Brit., Austr., Serb., Hung.

Lanolinum cum aqua—Belg.

Petrolatum—

Vaselinum—Japan., Belg., Austr., Dan., Helv., Svec., Fr., Serv., Ital., Russ.

Vaselinum flavum p., Germ. V, Ndl., Hung.

Paraffinum molle—Brit.

Vaselina—Hisp.

The U. S. P. title "*Adeps Lanæ Hydrosus*" has never come into general use and as a court decision (Hyg. Lab. Bull. No. 87, p. 205) has long since established the fact that the name lanolin became a free title when the patent on the product expired there appears to be no reason why anhydrous lanolin and lanolin should not be used in place of wool fat and hydrated wool fat in the Pharmacopœia of the United States.

The word "Vaselin" is so widely used as a popular title for a semi-solid fatty substance obtained from petroleum, and in European countries particularly has been so uniformly accepted as the official name for the product included in our own Pharmacopœia as petrolatum that there is considerable reason for the use of the word "vaselin" regardless of the claim that it is or was used as a trademark for the product of any one firm.

The U. S. P. title for one of the comparatively new remedies, "Solution of Hydrogen Dioxide," has been severely criticized, by chemists particularly, who point out that dioxide is used to designate certain definite combinations like manganese dioxide and is not applicable to a peroxide such as exists in the official solution. There appears to be no well founded reason why our official title should not comply with foreign pharmacopœias, and it might well be made to read "Solution of Hydrogen Peroxide."

As noted above, the problems involved in the securing of international uniformity in pharmacopœial titles while at times complicated, are by no means insurmountable and could be readily overcome if the revisers of the several pharmacopœias made sincere and consistent efforts to do so.

DISCUSSION.

W. C. Alpers, of New York, said Mr. Wilbert had expressed the wish in his paper to avoid the mistake made in foreign pharmacopœias of including the synonyms of an entire nation in the pharmacopœia. There was a tendency among some people to expect everything of the pharmacopœia. They thought the pharmacopœia was a pharmaceutical cyclopedia. He had always opposed this idea. He did not believe a pharmacopœia should be anything else than a book of standards for the drugs and chemicals used in the country for which it was intended. The question of bringing harmony out of the chaos of different nomenclatures rested with the International Pharmaceutical Congress, and one of the objects of that Congress was to find a way of uniformity in this matter, but it would probably be many years

before this desired end was accomplished. He had no doubt the same desire existed in other countries as in this, of bringing about greater uniformity. But, in the very nature of things, care must be exercised in a matter of this kind, and progress would necessarily be slow. No committee that could be appointed could successfully deal with a subject of such broad scope, and the only thing that could be done was to make recommendations to the International Congress as to this particular phase of their work; but not until the pharmacists of the world were gotten near enough together, by a conference, on scientific matters, would a remedy be found.

Mr. Wilbert responded that the pharmacists of America were extremely slow to adopt the recommendations of the International Congress. The Brussels Conference had suggested, not one name, but several for each article, and in a number of instances none of these had been adopted in this country. The International Conference could only suggest or recommend, and true uniformity could be had only when the necessity of such a thing became apparent everywhere. The trouble with the pharmacists of America was, that they were so provincial they were not willing to adopt the recommendations made by the International Congress, and put in the form of an international treaty signed by diplomatic representatives. This was one serious fault of the pharmacists of this country, they were over-conservative in making headway in such directions as this.

James M. Good, of St. Louis, thought it could be only pure selfishness that would deny the privilege of using the name "phenacetin." What one of the speakers had said did not apply with the same force to phenacetin that it did to diuretin, for instance. In many drug stores, it was not known that acetphenetidin was the official name for what was the proprietary product "phenacetin." He thought there was no necessity for the two names. Out in St. Louis, he said, a man could say, "I want to be called 'George Washington,'" and the courts would allow him to adopt the name; but it was a different proposition when it came to the United States courts. "Why, are we afraid of these people," he asked, "and hence not willing to give these synonyms?" He understood from what Mr. Raubenheimer had said that the probabilities were, that these people did not want any legal facts to be in the hands of the pharmacists of the country.

Mr. Wilbert, commenting upon this last suggestion, as to the legal phase of this matter, said that the American Medical Association, which was a responsible financial institution, had said that these names were applicable to the pharmacopœial articles. These facts had been published in the Journal of the American Medical Association repeatedly, and if these people had desired to do any fighting they had had ample opportunity.

Mr. Good suggested that it might be put up to the Pharmacopœial Committee as to whether or not these synonyms could be used. This was a subject that all pharmacists were vitally interested in, and he thought this Committee of Fifty could deal with it. Very few pharmacists were capable of acting intelligently on a proposition of this kind, but the committee should be able to give a good reason for whatever it did.

TABELLÆ DULCES, SWEET TABLETS FOR CHILDREN'S MEDICATION.

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Modern pharmacy boasts of many elegant and palatable preparations suitable for adults. But very little has thus far been done in this line for children, and yet attractiveness and palatability are even more important for the little ones than for the grown-up. Syrups have hitherto been our chief aids in making medicines more acceptable to children. Unfortunately, many a child has had its palate