

charged with the business of looking after these things, it would be a great help—a "clearing-house," or something of that kind, as Mr. Wilbert had suggested.

Mr. Wallace thought that all must agree with the remarks of Messrs. Wilbert, Freericks and Beal, and suggested that a clearing-house had already been established in the National Drug Trade Conference, for this very purpose. It was true that, up to the present time, nothing but anti-narcotic legislation had been discussed before that body, as that was such an important subject that it necessarily occupied all the time the delegates could give to the question of legislation. The resolutions creating the National Drug Trade Conference, specifically provided that this work was the particular purpose of its establishment, which statement, he thought, would be borne out by the proceedings of the past year.

Mr. Freericks agreed, that it was true that the National Drug Trade Conference could work out the purpose indicated by the writer of the paper.

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#### MANUFACTURE OF ABSORBENT COTTON.

As a general proposition absorbent cotton cannot be economically manufactured on the small scale, as the operation requires technical experience, special apparatus and a plant representing large capitalization. Some manufacturers, so-called, eliminate the preliminary manufacturing operations and buy the amount of absorbent cotton they may need, and use it as "raw material," preparing from it the various antiseptic cottons or specialties by their particular formulas. On the commercial scale the following outline represents the steps usually followed by the average manufacturer: The fat is first removed from the cotton by prolonged boiling under pressure with a solution of sodium hydrate or of an alkaline rosin-soda soap solution, and thorough washing with soft water. The cotton is then bleached by immersion in a clear solution of chlorinated lime, the latter being removed by one of several methods. One method consists in profuse washing with water, treatment with very dilute hydrochloric acid, immersion in a bath of sodium hyposulphite to remove the liberated chlorine, and addition of stearin soap. This reacts with the hydrochloric acid still retained by the cotton, stearic acid being liberated, this imparting to the cotton the peculiar "crunching" between the fingers when handled, a quality some users demand. This "crunching," however, may be removed by treatment with a very dilute solution of sodium bicarbonate. If desired, the absorbent property of the cotton may be destroyed by rinsing the material in a solution of alum. To secure a uniformly and satisfactory product thorough and copious washings with water after all operations must be rigidly observed.—*The Pharmaceutical Era.*