

NOTE ON TESTING CALCIUM COMPOUNDS.

BY CARL E. SMITH.

This is written to draw attention to a deficiency in the tests of the United States Pharmacopœia for the identification of calcium compounds and for the detection of certain possible contaminations, such as might easily lead to serious results because of the false sense of security the official tests would give. As an example, it might be mentioned that a specimen of strontium carbonate containing several percent of barium carbonate will stand all the tests given in the U. S. P. for establishing the identity and purity of precipitated calcium carbonate.

A sample of powder was recently submitted to the writer for analysis, which, because of a statement accompanying it concerning its uses, was supposed to consist, in greater part at least, of calcium salts. Preliminary tests proved presence of alkaline earth carbonate in large quantity. This led to the tentative conclusion that the powder probably consisted chiefly of calcium carbonate, as there was no reason to suspect presence of barium or strontium salts. Absence of color and complete solubility in dilute acids excluded the presence of elutriated native chalk. It was therefore expected that the U. S. P. tests laid down for precipitated chalk would definitely establish its identity as such and also detect in great probability any impurity or admixture. The sample stood all the tests and conformed also to the description of physical properties given. A little sodium chloride and traces of iron were found and as the U. S. P. lacks a test for magnesia, which is often found in calcium salts to some extent, a test was made in the usual way with phosphate, and a reaction was obtained that apparently indicated presence of a small amount of that impurity. Dependence on the U. S. P. tests, therefore, would have led to the conclusion that the specimen in question not only was calcium carbonate, but a salt of such a degree of purity as to warrant its use in medicinal preparations.

Further examination, however, showed that the sample was *not* calcium carbonate, that it contained neither calcium nor magnesium, but consisted of strontium carbonate contaminated with about 1.5 percent of barium carbonate.

The test upon which the Pharmacopœia relies entirely for the identification of calcium salts is the production of a precipitate on addition, to the neutral solution, of a solution of ammonium oxalate, said precipitate to be soluble in hydrochloric acid, but insoluble in acetic acid. But this reaction is by no means characteristic of calcium alone. It is shared by strontium and to some extent by barium and neither of these latter is excluded or detected by any other test provided. It is true that calcium salts are not liable to contain either barium or strontium as natural impurities, nor are these liable to be introduced in the course of manufacture, but accidental substitution or admixture might readily take place and such contingencies should certainly be guarded against by suitable means.

Examination of the text of the U. S. P. pertaining to other calcium salts show that in no case do the tests adequately differentiate calcium from other alkaline earth compounds. A test for the identification of a substance should be characteristic enough to distinguish it from everything else, beyond all reasonable doubt.

Of course, the remedy for the defects pointed out in this note is self-evident to every competent analyst. It need only be mentioned that a saturated water solution of calcium sulphate would seem to be the simplest means of detecting the presence of either barium or strontium.

CARL E. SMITH TESTING AND RESEARCH LABORATORY, 5 Beekman Street, New York.

PHARMACOPEIAL BOTANIC DRUGS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY *

By E. N. GATHERCOAL

Latin plant names

English names

Latin plant name	English names	Austrian	Belgian	British	Danish	French	German	Hungarian	Italian	Japaneese	Mexican	Netherlandes	Norwegian	Swiss	U.S.P. VII	U.S.P. IX	
191. <i>Elaphrium tomentosum</i> , res.	Tacamahaca.																
192. <i>Elettaria Cardamomum</i> , ft.	Cardamon.																
193. <i>Elettaria Cardamomum</i> , s.	Cardamon Seed.																
194. <i>Embelia Ribes</i> , ft.																	
195. <i>Equisetum arvense</i> , ster. hb.	Scouring Rush.																
196. <i>Erigeron Canadense</i> , v. o. fm. hb.	Oil of Fleabane.																
197. <i>Eriodictyon Californicum</i> , lv.	Yerba Santa.																
198. <i>Erythrae Centaurium</i> , fl. hb.	Centaury.																
199. <i>Erythrae Chilense</i> , hb.																	
200. <i>Erythronium Dens-canis</i> , stch. rt.	Adder's Tongue Starch.																
201. <i>Bryoxylon Coca</i> , lv.	Coca Leaves.																
202. <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> , lv.	Eucalyptus.																
203. <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> , v. o.	Oil of Eucalyptus.																
204. <i>Eucalyptus rostrata</i> , g.	Red Gum.																
205. <i>Eugenia caryophyllata</i> , fl. bd.	Cloves.																
206. <i>Eugenia caryophyllata</i> , v. o.	Oil of Cloves.																
207. <i>Eugenia Jambolana</i> , s.	Jambal.																
208. <i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i> , fl. hb.	Java Plum.																
209. <i>Buonymus atrorpurpureus</i> , rt. bk.	Wahoo.																
210. <i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i> , fl. hb.	Boneset.																
211. <i>Euphorbia resinifera</i> , l. m. j.	Euphorbium.																
212. <i>Exogonium purga</i> , tu.	Jalap.																
213. <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> , emp. o.	Beechwood Tar.																
214. <i>Perula species</i> , g. res.	Asafoetida.																
	P. foetida.																
	P. Narther.																
	P. Scorodosma.																
215. <i>Perula species</i> , g. res.	Galbanum.																
	P. galbaniflua.																
	P. rubricalis.																
216. <i>Perula species</i> , rt.	Sumbul.																
	P. Sumbul.																
217. <i>Ficus Carica</i> , ft.	Figs.																
218. <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> , ft.	Fennel.																
219. <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> , v. o.	Oil of Fennel.																
220. <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> , lv.	Fennel Leaves.																
221. <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> , rt.	Fennel Root.																
222. <i>Fragaria vesca</i> , ft. & rt.	Strawberries.																
223. <i>Fragaria vesca</i> , rh. & rt.	Strawberry Root.																

* Continued from page 293, March issue.

Latin plant names	English names	U.S.P. VII
249. Hamamelis Virginiana, lv.	Witchhazel Leaves	
250. Hederaea pulegioides, fl. hb.	Pennyroyal	X
251. Hederaea pulegioides, v. o	Oil of Pennyroyal	X
252. Helleborus niger, rh.	Black Hellebore	X
253. Hernaria glabra, fl. hb		
254. Hevea species, coag. milk-juice		
H. Brasilensis	Caoutchouc	
H. guyanensis.		
255. Hibiscus japonicus, rt.	Pearl Barley	
256. Hordeum vulgare, decorticated fl.	Malt	
257. Hordeum vulgare, malted fl.	Hops	
258. Humulus Lupulus, stro.	Lupulin	
259. Humulus Lupulus, gland, hairs	Goldenseal	
260. Hydrastis Canadensis, rh. & rt.	Indian Pennywort	
261. Hydrocotyle Asiatica, lv.		
262. Hydrocyamus niger, lv.	Henbane Seed	
263. Hydrocyamus niger, s.	St. John's Wort	
264. Hypericum perforatum, fl. hb	Hyssop	
265. Hyssopus officinalis, fl. hb		
266. Illicium verum, fl.	Star Anise	
267. Illicium verum, v. o.		
Inula Helenium, rt.	Oil of Anise	
Iponmea hederacea, s.	Elecampane	
269. Iponmea palmata, rt.	Pharbitis Seed	
270. Iponmea orizabensis, rt.	Mexican Scammony	
Iris Florentina, I. Germanica and I. pallida, rh.	Turpeth	
272. Jateorhiza palmata, rt.	Orris	
273. Juglans regia, lv.	Calumba	
Juniperus communis, fl.	Walnut Leaves	
275. Juniperus communis, v. o	Juniper Berries	
276. Juniperus communis, v. o	Oil of Juniper	
277. Juniperus communis wd. rt.		
278. Juniperus oxycedrus, empty o.	Oil of Cade	
279. Juniperus Sabina, lp.	Savin	
280. Juniperus Sabina, v. o	Oil of Savin	
Krameria triandra, rt.	Rhatany, Peruvian	
Lactuca virosa, i. m. j.	Lactucarium	
Lactuca sativa, hb	Lettuce	
284. Laminaria Cloustonii, thrs.	Sea-weed Tents	
285. Larix decidua, oires	Venice Turpentine	
286. Laserpitium Siler, ff.		

Austrian	X	Austrian	X
Belgian	X	Belgian	X
British	X	British	X
Croatian	X	Croatian	X
Danish	X	Danish	X
French	X	French	X
German	X	German	X
Hungarian	X	Hungarian	X
Italian	X	Italian	X
Jamaican	X	Jamaican	X
Mexican	X	Mexican	X
Netherlands	X	Netherlands	X
Norwegian	X	Norwegian	X
Russian	X	Russian	X
Serbian	X	Serbian	X
Spanish	X	Spanish	X
Swedish	X	Swedish	X
Swiss	X	Swiss	X
U.S. VIII.	X	U.S. VIII.	X
U.S. IX.	X	U.S. IX.	X

English names

Latin plant names

327. <i>Musa</i> species, lv. wax	<i>Cera Pisang</i>
328. <i>Myristica fragrans</i> , s. kl	Nutmeg
329. <i>Myristica fragrans</i> , v. o	Oil of Nutmeg
330. <i>Myristica fragrans</i> , f. o	Nutmeg Butter
331. <i>Myristica fragrans</i> , seed arillus	Mace
332. <i>Myristica fragrans</i> , v. o	Oil of Mace
333. <i>Myrtus communis</i> , fl.	Myrtle Fruit
334. <i>Myrtus communis</i> , lv	Myrtle Leaves
335. <i>Nasturtium officinale</i> , fr. hb	Water Cress
336. <i>Nicotiana Tabacum</i> , lv	Tobacco
337. <i>Nyssa silvatica</i> , wd	Tupelo Tents
338. <i>Ocimum Basilicum</i> , fl. hb	Olive Oil
339. <i>Olea Europea</i> , f. o. fl	Rest Harrow
340. <i>Ononis spinosa</i> , rh. & rt	Salep
341. <i>Orchis</i> species, tu	Cretan Dittany
342. <i>Origanium dictamnus</i> , fl. tp	Majoram
343. <i>Origanium majorana</i> , fl. tp	Wild Majororam
344. <i>Origanium vulgare</i> , fl. tp	Rice
345. <i>Orthosiphon stamineus</i> , lv	Rice Starch
346. <i>Oryza sativa</i> , fl	Gambir
347. <i>Oryza sativa</i> , starch fm. s	Gutta Percha
348. <i>Ouronaria Gambr</i> , ext. IV	Red Poppy Petals
349. <i>Palauquian</i> species, coag. milk juice	Opium
350. <i>Papaver Rhoeas</i> , Pet	Poppy Capsules
351. <i>Papaver somniferum</i> , c. i. m. j	Poppy Leaves
352. <i>Papaver somniferum</i> , unr, fl.	Poppy Seed
353. <i>Papaver somniferum</i> , lv	Poppyseed Oil
354. <i>Papaver somniferum</i> , s	Guarana
355. <i>Papaver somniferum</i> , f. o	Parsley Fruit
356. <i>Paronychia argentea</i> , fl. tp	Oil of Parsley
357. <i>Paulinia cupana</i> , paste of seeds	Parsley Root
358. <i>Petroselinum sativum</i> , fl	Dill
359. <i>Petroselinum sativum</i> , v. o	Oil of Dill
360. <i>Petroselinum sativum</i> , rt	Boldo Leaves
361. <i>Peucedanum graveolens</i> , fl	Phellandrum
362. <i>Peucedanum graveolens</i> , v. o	Winter Cherry
363. <i>Peumus Boldus</i> , lv	Calabar Bean
364. <i>Phellandrium aquaticum</i> , fl	
365. <i>Physalis Alkekengi</i> , fl	
366. <i>Physostigma venenosum</i> , s	

367.	<i>Phytolacca acinosa</i> , var. <i>esculenta</i> , rt.	Jap. Poke Root.
368.	<i>Phytolacca decandra</i> ; rt.	Poke Root.
369.	<i>Picrasma excelsa</i> , htwd.	Quassia.
370.	<i>Picrorhiza Kurroa</i> , rh.	
371.	<i>Pilocarpus</i> species, lf.	Jaborandi.
	<i>P. Jaborandi</i> .	<i>Pernambuco</i> J.
	<i>P. microphyllus</i> .	<i>Mearnsianum</i> J.
	<i>P. pennatifolius</i> .	<i>Rio Jaborandi</i> .
372.	<i>Pimenta officinalis</i> , ft.	Allspice.
373.	<i>Pimenta officinalis</i> , v. o.	Oil of Allspice.
374.	<i>Pimpinella Anisum</i> , ft.	Anise.
375.	<i>Pimpinella Anisum</i> , v. o.	Oil of Anise.
376.	<i>Pimpinella Saxifrage</i> , rh. & rt.	Saxifrage.
377.	<i>Pinites succinifera</i> , fossil res.	Amber.
378.	<i>Pinites succinifera</i> , emp. oil.	Oil of Amber.
379.	<i>Pinus</i> species, olr.	Turpentine.
380.	<i>Pinus</i> species, v. o.	Oil of Turpentine.
381.	<i>Pinus</i> species, res.	Rosin.
382.	<i>Pinus</i> species, emp. o. fm. res	
383.	<i>Pinus</i> species, emp. prod. fm. wd.	Liquid Tar.
384.	<i>Pinus</i> species, emp. prod. fm. wd.	Solid Tar.
385.	<i>Pinus</i> species, v. o. fm. tar.	Oil of Tar.
386.	<i>Pinus</i> species, pf. olr.	Burgundy Pitch.
387.	<i>Pinus</i> species, v. o. lv.	Oil of Pine Needles.
388.	<i>Pinus</i> species, young sprouts.	
(1)	<i>Pinus</i> species.	
(2)	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> .	
(3)	<i>Pinus Laricio</i> .	
(4)	<i>Pinus Pinaster</i> .	
(5)	<i>Pinus Taeda</i> .	
(6)	<i>Pinus palustris</i> .	
(7)	<i>Pinus pumilio</i> .	
(8)	<i>Pinus montana</i> , var. <i>nurmilio</i> .	

343. Austrian and Swiss—*Majorana hortensis*.
 348. British—*Uncaria Gambir*.
 349. Also from *Pavetta* species.

357. Austrian and Spanish—*P. sorbillis*.
 360. Austrian—*Carum Petroleum*.

369. German, Japanese, Norwegian and U. S. P.—*Picrasma excelsa*, Japanese—
 also from *Picrasma quassoides*.
 375. Austrian, Belgian, Japanese and Swedish recognize anethol in place of the
 volatile oil.
 376. Also from *P. magna*.

(To be continued.)