

PHARMACOPŒIAS AND FORMULARIES

CODEX MEDICAMENTORUM NEDERLANDICUS

The Dutch Codex stands in a somewhat similar relation to the Pharmacopœia of the Netherlands as the British Pharmaceutical Codex does to the British Pharmacopœia. This, the second edition, is published in two volumes. The first contains introductory matter and monographs on chemical and vegetable substances, galenical preparations, a few homœopathic remedies and materials such as catgut. The second volume resembles in some respects the Formulary section of the British Pharmaceutical Codex, with the addition of a number of prescriptions. Division of the work into two volumes is no doubt a convenience to those whose interests are restricted to, or chiefly concerned with, one part only. It may, however, introduce a tendency for readers to overlook general considerations or specific requirements for an ingredient, dealt with in the first volume, when referring to the formula of a preparation given in the second volume. The recommendations on nomenclature published in the Interim Report on the Unification of Pharmacopœias have not been adopted completely, notably with vegetable drugs which appear under titles such as *Radix Belladonnæ*, not *Belladonna Radix*. Similarly the style of the monographs differs from that used in English and American counterparts by the omission of side headings printed in bold-faced type, which afford useful guidance when consulting particular points.

The monographs cover a wide range, from modern synthetic drugs to vegetable substances of antiquity as, for example, *olibanum* and *manna*. There are specifications for six barbiturates, including *cyclobarbitone* and *methylphenobarbitone*, for vitamins such as *aneurine hydrochloride* and *nicotinamide*, and for *ergometrine* and *amphetamine*. Proprietary names are given at the foot of the monographs, a practice which involves no fewer than 14 brand names for *Opium Concentratum (Papaveretum)*. The requirements for *trichloroethylene* are not as comprehensive as might be expected for an anæsthetic, particularly in the provision of limit tests for likely impurities.

Vegetable substances are represented by monographs on 25 herbs and leaves, 7 flowers, 14 fruits and seeds, 9 barks, and 13 rhizomes and roots. The drugs range from *senna fruit* and *belladonna root* to those of less significance in medical practice in this country, such as *calendula flowers*, *matico leaf*, *shepherds' purse* and *fresh sundew*. Microscopical characters are described in detail, with cross-reference to a series of 60 drawings printed at the end of this volume as illustrations of the diagnostic features. *Scammony resin* is attributed to *scammony root* derived from *Convolvulus Scammonia* Linn., a source which does not appear to have been available in this country for many years.

The second volume contains, as Part IIA, nearly 300 formulæ including a wide selection of injections and tablets. As in Part I, brand names are given and, indeed, some formulæ appear to be imitations of patent medicines well-known in Britain. Preparations for which formulæ are not usually provided in books of this character published in English include *tooth-paste*, *tooth-powders* and *denture powders*. Part IIB consists of a selection of prescriptions such as may be found in a modern prescribers' formulary and others less frequently encountered nowadays, such as *Pilulæ Cochis* and *Mistura Ferri Composita (Griffith's Mixture)*. The volume concludes with sections comprising the *Formularium Medicamentorum Nederlandicum* and the *Formularium Medicamentorum Indicum*.

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