

THE COMPOSITION OF CERTAIN SECRET REMEDIES.*

MEDICINES FOR INDIGESTION, CONSTIPATION, ETC.

THE proprietary medicines for indigestion, constipation, liver disorders, and allied complaints, particulars relating to which are given below, are, it is scarcely necessary to say, only a small selection out of the very large number of those offered to the public. They are selected as comprising (with certain others previously dealt with, such as Seigel's Syrup and Beecham's Pills) those which appear to be most widely advertised and sold, and as being probably representative of this very large class of nostrums. The medicines examined include several very old-established ones and some of quite recent introduction; and it is instructive to notice that it is the old-established ones for which the least extravagant claims are made, and which contain drugs likely to have many of the results promised, while the one most recently introduced is also the one for which the most extravagant and absurd pretensions are put forward in an aggressive manner, and is also precisely the one in which no medicinal substance whatever could be detected.

In the examination of pills or tablets containing mixtures of such substances as aloes or extract of aloes, extract of colocynth, resins of jalap, scammony, or podophyllin, oils of peppermint, clove, or cinnamon, with powdered drugs like ginger, capsicum, cardamoms, colocynth, rhubarb (all yielding extracts as soon as the pills are treated with solvents), and the whole probably massed with the aid of syrup, glucose, liquorice powder, etc., the difficulties to be encountered by the analyst are far greater than in many of the combinations that have been dealt with in previous articles; and it is not possible as the result of any reasonable and practicable amount of investigation to assign a quantitative formula for any such combination of articles which are themselves variable, and it may easily happen that some constituents will escape detection, or will be impossible of identification. It is, therefore, better to avoid naming any quantities of the different ingredients found, even when the quantitative determinations (which have been made in every case) have left very little doubt as to the amount of some particular substance present in a given combination. And it must be remembered that with several of the pills other ingredients than those named may have been present in small quantity and escaped detection, though it may fairly be said that this does not apply to powerful or very important ingredients.

MER-SYREN.

This consists of powders which are supplied at 2s. 9d. per box of twenty by Mer-Syren, Ltd., London. There are several indications that the claims made for this article have undergone progressive evolution. The earliest advertisement of it which is before us is a handbill apparently issued three or four years ago, which commences thus:

"They that go down to the sea in ships" and Suffer from the distressing Malady of Sea-sickness will find a Safe and Sure Preventive and Antidote in Mersyren.

Mersyren is a never failing Rapid Remedy.

Mersyren is not a Drug.

And the name and address at the foot are:

The Mersyren Syndicate, 14, America Square, London, E.C. and Singapore Dispensary, 40, Raffles Place, Singapore.

A little later a lengthy advertisement in a weekly paper is headed:

Try this "quick cure" for Biliousness and Indigestion—Free of Cost.

* Previous articles of this series were published in the following issues of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL: 1904, vol. ii, p. 1585; 1906, vol. ii, pp. 27, 1645; 1907, vol. i, p. 213; vol. ii, pp. 24, 160, 209, 393, 530, 1653; 1908, vol. i, pp. 833, 942, 1373; vol. ii, pp. 86, 505, 1022, 1110, 1193, 1285, 1566, 1697, 1875; 1909, vol. i, pp. 31, 909, 1128; vol. ii, p. 1419; 1910, vol. i, pp. 151, 213, 393, 1005, 1063, 1120; vol. ii, pp. 982, 1350, 1928; 1911, vol. i, pp. 26, 91, 823.

The following extracts are from what follows the heading:

Digestive troubles are the curse of the present generation. And drug remedies for digestive ailments are almost a bigger curse still. . . .

Here is a way (and a free way) by which you can absolutely cure your Digestive trouble by a remedy which is neither a drug nor a purgative.

Here is a way by which you can absolutely cure:—

Biliousness,	Indigestion,
Sick Headache,	Liver Trouble,
Dyspepsia,	and other
Gastritis,	Digestive Disorders.
Free of Charge.	

Here is a perfect natural remedy which will be freely sent to every reader who writes for it, and which will quickly, almost instantaneously, cure your trouble and enable you to regain that good health, those unburdened spirits, to which, perhaps, you have been a stranger for so very long.

You have heard of "Mer-Syren," of course!

You have heard of it as a non-drug, non-purging remedy for Stomach and Liver Trouble.

But perhaps you have not as yet quite realized what a wonderful remedy it is. . . .

"Mer-Syren" is a *tasteless powder*. It is pleasant to take, and swift and sure in action. It is neither a drug nor an aperient. And it cures in one dose.

A little later again appears a whole-page advertisement in a London daily; the heading of the first two columns is—

"Remarkable New Book on Health
by Dr. Pearson.

"How the Body Cures Itself."

and the remainder is headed—

"The '10 Minute Mer-Syren Health Lessons.'"

The first part is devoted to a description of the book, and a summary of its twenty so-called chapters. The following extracts will suffice as a specimen:

Originally published at 2s. 6d., a popular Second Edition is now being given free to all who will put to the practical test of personal trial the Author's "10 Minute Health Lessons." . . .

The book tells what every good Doctor knows, but is, for many reasons, unable to tell his patients.

The whole book is written in straightforwardly candid appreciation of the fact that the Layman Needs—and Desires—Health Knowledge of this vital kind. . . .

"Mer-Syren" is the name of a tasteless powder derived from a herb which powerfully aids the health-reparative power of the body.

It is not a pill—not a purgative—not weakening—not stomach-upsetting—but just a "Mer-Syren 10-Minute Health-Lesson" to that part of your body which needs it. . . .

. . . first of all, get and read Dr. Pearson's book, *How the Body Cures Itself* (by means of the "Mer-Syren 10-Minute Health-Lessons") . . .

The book itself is free.

You have only to get a 2s. 9d. packet of 20 "Mer-Syren 10-Minute Health-Lesson" Powders.

The "book" is unquestionably the *pièce de résistance* of all this advertising. It is a paper-covered pamphlet of 63 pages, each of the "chapters" referred to in the advertisement occupying an average space of less than three pages. It is described as—

By Dr. Pearson, Author of
"The Liver in Health and Disease,"
"What to Eat and What to Avoid,"
"The Abuse of Phosphorus,"
"The Etiology of Cholera,"
etc., etc.,

(Late Principal Medical Officer, North Bhangulpore, India).

Reference to the volume of maps in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* failed to discover any place named Bhangulpore or North Bhangulpore in India.

The knowledge possessed by this "Late Principal Medical Officer," who curiously omits to give his initials, or his degrees or qualifications justifying the prefix "Dr.," may be judged from the following extracts:

This pamphlet has been compiled for the benefit of the myriads of afflicted in every part of the globe, who, after trying the ordinary means of cure at present obtaining to no purpose, are casting about to discover a method of treatment for disease which shall cure their ailments and restore them to their former healthy condition. . . .

This remedy—Mer-Syren—the direct outcome of many years' careful and painstaking study on the part of a few men who may be said to have devoted their whole lives to investigations as to the Cause and Cure of Disease—is assuredly one of the greatest boons ever conferred upon suffering humanity.

The plain fact is that, as regards the nature of disease, the Medical Profession is pretty much where Harvey left it nearly three centuries ago, whilst the means of cure are little better than those employed by Celsus or Galen; and diseases are arranged in a few haphazard groups, as motley and incongruous in their composition and disposition as the various sections of, say, a political party.

We are, therefore, driven to accept the dictum of Hippocrates: "*All diseases spring from one cause, and the types of all diseases are the same.*" This common origin of all diseases is to be found in that condition, which, for want of a better definition, we shall call "*Debility of the Cells,*" either *partial* or *general*. Systems and theories may follow each other like the waves of the sea, but the trend of medical opinion is setting in this direction, and, to the opinion expressed by the Father of Medicine, all Schools of Medicine must come at last. . . .

The Mineral Acids, Nitric, Hydrochloric and Sulphuric, and Mineral Oils (Petroleum) are in everyday use as remedies, whilst many of the Earths are diverted from the uses for which they were intended by the Creator, and forced into the human stomach. Animal substances, many of the most repulsive nature and origin, are almost universally used by Medical Men the world over . . . beetles, spider's web, crab's eyes, tiger's tongue, rhinoceros' horn, and other repulsive objects form part of the *Materia Medica* now in vogue with the Medical Profession. . . .

The old Blue Pill and Black Draught of our forefathers has given place to various Salines and the waters of many Spas in the treatment of Bilious affections, but all to no purpose, the discovery of Mer-Syren ushered in a new era in the History of Medicine; not only so far as the Liver was concerned, but also in the case of many other affections regarding the treatment of which medical men of every school confessed themselves to be nonplussed. . . . Under its specific and benign—yet effective—operation the powers of Nature have been reinforced and strengthened so that she has been enabled to quickly relieve herself from the incubus of disease, and, phoenix-like, arise from her ashes renewed, invigorated and endowed with all her pristine vitality.

This is the sober opinion gleaned from an experience of one versus in medicine for a period of nearly forty years. . . .

Mer-Syren is composed of the active principles of certain rare plants which flourish in the valleys situated on the southern slopes of the Himalaya, between the immense gorge separating Nepal from Bhutan on the East, and Almorah on the North-West—the very names of which are unknown to Western Science, and are therefore not included in any *Pharmacopoeia* extant. Mer-Syren, therefore, cannot be imitated either in Europe or the two Americas. Nevertheless, purchasers should protect themselves by observing that the name of the Mer-Syren Company appears on every box, and that the place of origin is clearly stated thereon. The alkaloids upon which its extraordinary and startling effects depend cannot be determined by analysis, as *all organic substances defy detection by any means known to chemical science.* . . .

There are in fact no diseased states or conditions in which the use of Mer-Syren does not produce beneficial results.

Thus the "powder derived from a herb" of the newspaper advertisement has become the "active principles of certain rare plants" in the book, just as the remedy for sea-sickness has become the cure-all:

for Mer-Syren possesses the wonderful property of permeating every part of the organism with the same good influences. Moreover, although its gentle stimulating and strengthening powers are felt throughout the entire organism, yet its specific healing actions are principally directed to any part labouring under diseased or disordered action. By virtue of its unique and specific properties, Mer-Syren immediately operates upon any organ or tissue whose functions may be in any way deranged, or whose structures may be breaking down in consequence of disease. And all structures in either of the two just named abnormal conditions will instantly respond to the gentle action of Mer-Syren, when every other form of treatment produces no effect whatever.

The directions supplied with the powders were as follows:

For Indigestion and Dyspepsia: Upon rising place two Powders dry upon the tongue and wash down with a draught of hot water. For Bilious Headaches: Take one Powder, or two if the attack be very severe, and wash down with cold water.

In chronic cases it is obvious that in order to effect a complete recovery the Powders should be taken regularly until cured.

The powders had an average weight of 25½ grains. Analysis showed the material to consist principally of starch, with a little broken vegetable tissue. Microscopical examination showed the starch to be that of the potato, while the histological elements of the tissue also agreed exactly with those of the potato. Some raw potato was therefore dried without heat and powdered, and the two powders compared in their behaviour to a large number of tests, qualitative and quantitative, and also by means of the microscope. The potato which was prepared as described became greyish in colour during the

drying, whereas the Mer-Syren powder was of a creamy colour; no other difference was found between them, and no other substance but potato could be detected.

CICFA.

This medicine, which has had four different names, but appears to be called Cicfa at present, is supplied at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per package by Capsuloids (1909) Ltd., Borough, London, S.E. A 1s. 1½d. package was found to contain 21 tablets, and a 2s. 9d. package 63.

The original name of these tablets appears to have been "Tablones," but in consequence of legal action taken by another firm, whose trade mark this word was considered to resemble too closely, it was changed to "Cicfa." The derivation of this word is supplied by the phrase which occurs freely in the advertisements, "Cures Indigestion Constipation Flatulence Acidity." Later, however, this word was dropped and the medicine advertised as "Mother's Advice"; more recently still it was advertised as "Tablones," while now the former name of Cicfa seems to have been readopted.

The preparation is advertised in the following terms:

You may eat what you please when you please if your Indigestion, Flatulence and Constipation are not merely Relieved but permanently cured by "Mother's Advice" (Formerly called "Cicfa"). Purgatives often relieve Indigestion and make you feel better for a few days. "Mother's Advice" cures absolutely and permanently, because while purgatives simply remove the undigested food, "Mother's Advice" completely digests everything you eat.

WHY "CICFA" MUST CURE EVERY CASE.

All the tortures of Indigestion, the Acidity and Heartburn, with Teeth on Edge, the Burning Spot behind the Left Shoulder Blade, with pains shooting through towards the Heart, the Heart Palpitation, with Cold Hands and Feet and General Weakness, the Flatulence and Pressure and Discomfort, the rumbling and often excruciating Bowel pain, are all due to your failure to digest your food, and three-quarters of it is due to Failure To Digest Starchy Food Like Bread, Potatoes, Bananas, etc., but you like to eat those, and you need them, and if you could digest them you would have none of this pain, discomfort, and misery, and you would have all the nourishment which comes from such food when well digested.

You do not digest the food because you have not enough digestive juices in the Stomach and Bowels. "Cicfa" contains just enough digestive material to make sure that the albuminous food like meat, eggs, etc., will be digested in your stomach, and just enough of that wonderful digestive material Which Is Not Found In Any Other Proprietary Medicine which digests all starchy food like bread, potatoes, bananas, etc.

Dose.—One with the early part of each meal three times daily. Severe cases may take two with each meal for a short time, and then reduce the dose as the cure proceeds.

The tablets had a chocolate-coloured sugar coating: after removal of this they had an average weight of 1.85 grains. Analysis showed the presence of pepsin, diastase, reducing sugar (apparently maltose), a bitter extract agreeing in characters with extract of cascara sagrada, a small quantity of a pungent substance which appeared to be oleo-resin of capsicum, together with talc and a little starch, the last being probably derived from the coating. The digestive power on egg-albumen and on starch was determined; the former corresponded to about ⅓ grain of pepsin of B.P. strength in each tablet; the material digested about 1.4 times its own weight of starch in half an hour at 40°, which corresponds to a very small proportion of diastase, but as commercial diastase varies much in strength, no quantity can be specified as equivalent; from a comparison of the bitterness and pungency of a mixture made up to imitate the tablets the amount of extract of cascara appeared to be about ¼ grain in each, and of oleo-resin of capsicum about ⅓ grain.

WHELPTON'S PURIFYING PILLS.

Whelpton's Purifying Pills are supplied by G. Whelpton and Son, London, E.C., at 1s. 1½d. per box containing 60 pills.

They are advertised in the following terms:

Indigestion is the primary cause of most of the ills to which we are subject. Hence a medicine that stimulates the digestive organs will relieve quite a number of complaints. Whelpton's Vegetable Purifying Pills arouse the stomach to action, promote the flow of gastric juice, and give tone to the whole system. Headache flies away. Biliousness, Kidney Disorders, and Skin Complaints disappear, while cheerful spirits and clear complexions follow in due course. . . . The occasional or

regular use of Whelpton's Pills, by assisting Nature to get rid of superfluous matter, relieves the congested condition of skin and kidneys, and speedily restores the natural functions of these important organs. Whelpton's Purifying Pills are thus a direct purifier of the blood. . . . Daily doses of Whelpton's Purifying Pills will arouse the Liver to proper action, and, by removing the cause of obstruction, speedily restore the general health of the body.

These Pills may be taken at any time, but it is generally found most convenient to take them at bed-time. In ordinary cases two will be a sufficient dose, but three or four may sometimes be necessary according to the age and strength of the patient or obstinacy of the complaint.

The pills had an average weight of $2\frac{1}{2}$ grains. Chemical and microscopical examination showed the presence of aloes (apparently Socotrine), powdered colocynth, ginger, and gentian, the last-named ingredient being less positively indicated than the others. No evidence of the presence of mercury or calomel was obtained.

CHAS. FORDE'S BILE BEANS.

These "beans," which consist of ovoid, coated pills, are supplied by the Bile Bean Manufacturing Co., London, E.C. A box price 1s. 1½d. was found to contain 30 pills, and a 2s. 9d. box 90.

In a circular enclosed in the package they are described as "absolutely unequalled" for biliousness and other complaints, of which thirty-eight are named, including anaemia, piles, influenza, despondency, blackheads, rheumatism, etc. It is further stated that

Chas. Forde's also cure Fatty and Waxy Degeneration of the Liver, "Hob-nailed" or "Gin-Drinker's" Liver (Cirrhosis), and the host of ailments having a common origin in impaired digestion, assimilation, and secretion, and in defective working of the excretory organs. Chas. Forde's are likewise of inestimable service in all the disorders peculiar to women, while as a general aperient and tonic remedy they are unsurpassed.

Chas. Forde's bile beans do not contain a single particle of Mercury, Bismuth, or other poisonous mineral substance, and are also devoid of Aloes. . . .

As a General Aperient.—Two to four beans as occasion may require.

As a Tonic.—One bean after the midday meal, and one upon going to bed.

The pills were coated with gelatine, the coating being coloured black. The average weight after removal of the coating was 2.3 grains.

The statement that they are devoid of aloes appears to be true only if it is taken to refer to aloes itself and not to preparations of aloes, as tests showed very clear evidence of the presence of aloin; other constituents shown by chemical and microscopical examination were powdered cardamoms, oil of peppermint, and wheat flour; some evidence was obtained of extract of colocynth, but not sufficiently conclusive for its presence to be definitely asserted. No evidence of the presence of mercury or calomel was obtained.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS.

These are supplied by Carter Medicine Co., New York; they are largely advertised and sold in Great Britain, and there is a British dépôt in London. A package price 1s. 1½d. was found to contain 42.

They are described on the package as

Purely Vegetable. For Headache. For Dizziness. For Biliousness. For Torpid Liver. For Constipation. For Sallow Skin. For the Complexion,

and in a circular contained in the package as

designed to act upon the Liver and Bile in such a manner as to secure all the benefits of a prompt and active medicine, without any of the unpleasant effects which usually attend the use of ordinary liver remedies.

The pills were sugar-coated, and after removing the coating had an average weight of $\frac{1}{2}$ grain. Chemical and microscopical examination gave evidence of the presence of aloes (Barbados) or a preparation of aloes, podophyllin, powdered liquorice root, and wheat starch, the last probably from the coating. No other ingredient could be detected.

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS.

These are supplied by Thomas Holloway, London. A box price 1s. 1½d. was found to contain 49 pills.

It is stated in an advertisement that

They have positively no equal for thoroughly cleansing the system and putting the liver and kidneys in functional order, without pain or griping.

A pamphlet which was wrapped round the box is entitled:

A Key to Health!!! The Hollowayan System of Medicine and its adaptation for the treatment of many Diseases incident to the human frame.

It appears from the pamphlet that "the Hollowayan System of Medicine" might be summed up in the words: Take Holloway's Pills; apply Holloway's Ointment. Among the complaints for which this "system" is prescribed are gout, rheumatism, sciatica, paralysis, liver complaints, asthma, inflammation of the kidneys, bronchitis, quinsy, bad legs, bad breasts, ulcers, wounds, sores, tumours, piles and fistulae, the turn of life, floodings and the whites, obstruction of the menses, dropsies, jaundice, youthful indiscretion, impotency, palpitation of the heart, debility, indigestion, constipation, gravel, stone, venereal diseases, influenza, erysipelas, lepra blotches, scald heads and ringworms, scrofula, ague, diarrhoea, etc. The dose recommended in different cases varies from two pills a day to seven pills night and morning.

The pills had an average weight of 1.4 grain. Chemical and microscopical examination showed the presence of aloes (Barbados), or a preparation of aloes, powdered ginger, and soap. There was no evidence of the presence of mercury or calomel.

PAGE WOODCOCK'S WIND PILLS.

These pills are supplied by Page Woodcock, Ltd., London, N. The price of a box containing 32 pills was 1s. 1½d.

They are thus described in a circular enclosed in the package:

The Most Effectual Medicine Yet Discovered for the Prevention and Cure of Disease. . . .

In all cases of Indigestion, Liver Complaints, Biliousness, Constipation, Palpitation, Debility, Anaemia, Irregularities, Bad Assimilation, Wind in the Stomach and Bowels, Spasms, Heartburn, Giddiness, Disturbed Slumbers, Piles, Toothache, Neuralgia, etc.; they will, if taken in accordance with the following directions, effect a positive and permanent cure in the most stubborn and deep-rooted cases.

The directions in various cases are from three to nine pills to be taken daily.

The pills were pearl-coated, and after removal of the coating had an average weight of 1.6 grain. Chemical and microscopical examination showed the presence of aloes (Barbados) or a preparation of aloes, a little ginger, a little soap, a trace of capsicum, and oils of peppermint and cinnamon; some other vegetable tissue was also present, but it did not possess any characters by which it could be identified. No mercury or calomel was present.

SCOTT'S PILLS.

Scott's pills are supplied by W. Lambert, London, in boxes, price 1s. 1½d., containing 24 pills. A circular sent with the pills is headed:

Bilious and Liver Complaints, Indigestion, Costiveness, Loss of Appetite, Worms, Gout, Inflammations, Rheumatism, Lumbago, etc., effectually removed by the use of Dr. Scott's Bilious and Liver Pills. . . . Prepared from the Recipe of Dr. Scott, of Bromley, Kent.

The recommendations for their employment include the following:

The evil effects arising from intemperance will be prevented if recourse is had to them after excess of eating or drinking. Preparatory to Sea or Cold Bathing they are particularly necessary; by taking a Pill or two for a few nights previous, the bowels will be cleansed from any crudities that may adhere to them, and the body rendered in a proper state for the prevention of many uncomfortable complaints. They are also the most excellent alterative and cleanser of sallow complexions, caused by obstructions of the Liver. To seafaring persons they are particularly recommended, as the use of them will prevent many disorders incident to such a life, which frequently prove fatal. Pregnant women will find them a most efficacious medicine in preventing Bilious Vomiting, Nervous Headaches, and other complaints peculiar to their situation. . . .

Mr. Lambert wishes to impress on parents the necessity of administering these Pills to their children; they will find them a most efficacious Medicine for eradicating Worms, Fevers, Coughs, Inflammations, and all disorders of the Stomach and Bowels; the child will be strengthened, saved from all sickness, and the parents themselves much trouble and uneasiness.

The pills had an average weight of 2.4 grains. Chemical and microscopical examination indicated the presence of aloes (Socotrine) in rather small quantity, ginger, rhubarb, and soap. No mercury or calomel was present.

KER NAK.

Ker-Nak, or Ker-Nak Pills, are supplied by a company in Leeds at 1s. 1½d. per package, containing 41 pills. They are thus described in a circular accompanying the package:

Ker-Nak is a natural and valuable remedy which marks an important step in advance of old-fashioned purges and drastic mineral pills. These latter, with their mercury, bismuth, and other crude ingredients, only irritate, inflame, and, in the end, seriously injure, the delicate linings of the stomach and bowels. All such mineral drugs, doubtful in their physiological action and paralysing and harmful in their eventual effect, do not in any way, directly or indirectly, enter into the composition of Ker-Nak, which, on the contrary, contains certain essences and oils, the valuable constituents of fresh ripe fruit, together with valuable vegetable extracts and internal disinfectants reputed for their purity and medicinal worth. . . . The unapproachable excellence of Ker-Nak from a medicinal or healing standpoint, as well as its greater suitability for sickness contracted under present-day conditions . . . renders this natural treatment, so invaluable in cases of: Constipation, Headache, Indigestion . . . Sleeplessness, Neuralgia, Palpitation . . . Anaemia, and most Female Ailments (in youth, motherhood, middle-age, and declining years), Piles . . . Hysterics, Shortness of Breath . . . Rheumatic Affections, Influenza, and its after-effects. . . .

The lengthy circular concludes with a paragraph headed:

FREE ADVICE.

Any reader in need of sound advice upon his or her own ailment can have, Free of Cost, the assistance of our fully qualified Medical Staff.

Describe in detail all the symptoms of your illness, say how long the illness has lasted, and what you have been doing for it in the past; and have no hesitation in stating fully any matter which troubles you. The medical staff will tell you frankly and in confidence what is the best treatment for you to adopt.

The directions on the package are:

Dose—1 to 3, or in severe cases, two doses of 2 each, one dose at night and repeat after the next mid-day meal.

The pills were coated with orange-coloured pearl-coating; after removing it they had an average weight of 1½ grain. Chemical and microscopical examination indicated the presence of aloes (Barbados) or a preparation of aloes, a little soap, a very little oleo-resin of capsicum, and a little vegetable tissue which appeared to be marshmallow root (used as an excipient). There was no evidence of the presence of mercury or calomel.

COCKLE'S PILLS.

The present maker's name of these is not given, but they are described in the circulars which accompany them "As Prepared by the late James Cockle, Surgeon and Apothecary, 4, Great Ormond Street, London." A box, price 1s. 1½d., was found to contain 16 pills. It was also stated that:

These pills consist of a careful and peculiar admixture of the best and mildest vegetable aperients, with the pure extract of the flowers of the camomile. They will be found a most efficacious remedy for derangement of the digestive organs, and for obstructions and torpid action of the liver and bowels, which produce indigestion and the several varieties of Bilious and Liver Complaints . . . these Pills are not recommended as containing any new or dangerously active ingredients; on the contrary, they are characterized by a remarkable simplicity of combination, and whatever merit they may be found to possess depends as much upon the selection of pure drugs and the unusual labour and attention bestowed upon their subsequent preparation, as upon the acknowledged peculiarity of their composition. They are not recommended as a panacea, nor are they adapted to all complaints; but as a mild and efficacious aperient and tonic in the various forms of Indigestion, with intestinal irregularity admitting their use, it will not, perhaps, be an exaggeration to state that they have been resorted to under all systems of diet, changes of climate, or atmospheric alternations, with an extraordinary degree of success, for a period extending over more than half a century.

The directions vary from "One Pill to be taken an hour before dinner" to "Two or three at any time."

The pills had an average weight of 4 grains. Chemical and microscopical examination indicated the presence of aloes (Socotrine), a little soap, powdered colocynth, powdered jalap, and another vegetable tissue which did not agree in characters with any drug now in ordinary use, and which could not be identified. No evidence of the presence of mercury or calomel was detected.

BURGESS' LION PILLS.

We published some time ago the results of analysis of Burgess' Lion Ointment, and the Pills are a companion

medicine. A box, price 1s. 1½d., was found to contain 24 pills. In a circular enclosed in the package it is stated that

The Pills act beneficially by imparting a healthy action to the Liver and Digestive Organs, removing Obstructions and purifying the Blood, completely renovating the health by expelling and preventing the recurrence of disease. When suffering from Headache, Giddiness, Pains in the Back or Loins, Loss of Appetite, or a feeling of General Debility, these Pills will be found most invaluable.

The directions on the label are "Two to be taken at bedtime."

The pills were pearl-coated; after removal of the coating they had an average weight of 4½ grains. Chemical and microscopical examination indicated the presence of ipecacuanha, rhubarb, a little jalap, probably aloes (Socotrine), and oil of peppermint, and soap. There was no evidence of the presence of mercury or calomel.

HOOD'S VEGETABLE PILLS.

These are supplied by C. I. Hood and Co, Limited, London, in a bottle, price 1s. 1½d., containing 34 pills.

They are described on the package as

The great Liver Invigorator. A mild, efficient cathartic, purely vegetable, unequalled as a family physic and after dinner pill. A valuable remedy for Liver Complaint, Constipation, Nausea, Biliousness, Headache, Indigestion, Sour Stomach, Distress after Eating, Jaundice.

The directions, given in a circular enclosed in the package, are:

For Biliousness, Jaundice, Sick Headache, Constipation, Flatulence, Dizziness, Nausea, and all Liver Troubles, and to Relieve or Prevent Malaria and Influenza. For laxative effect, the usual dose is one, two or three pills taken at bedtime in a draught of water; for purgative effect, from three to six pills, taken in the same way. . . .

For Indigestion, Heartburn, Distress in the Stomach, Fulness after Eating: The usual dose is one pill taken immediately after eating, in a draught of water.

The pills were sugar-coated, and, after removal of the coating, they had an average weight of ½ grain. Chemical and microscopical examination showed the presence of aloes (Barbados) or a preparation of aloes—probably aloin, ginger, capsicum, colocynth, soap, and probably a little jalap. There was no evidence of the presence of mercury or calomel.

SOCIETY FOR THE RELIEF OF WIDOWS AND ORPHANS OF MEDICAL MEN.

At the annual general meeting of this society on May 17th, Dr. Blandford, President, in the chair, it was reported that the society consists of one honorary member and 140 life and 153 ordinary members. The invested funds amounted to £100,900, and the income consisted of the interest on this sum, £3,141, together with £352 received in subscriptions and donations. The sum of £3,131 10s. had been distributed among the annuitants of the charity, 48 widows and 13 orphans. The Copeland Fund enabled the society to grant to any widow or orphan already in receipt of the society's ordinary relief extraordinary assistance in special circumstances of unusual distress, such as blindness or grave permanent disease, and to continue such extra relief in the case of orphans beyond the age of 16 or 18 years, at which ordinary relief ceases. Relief is only granted to the widows and orphans of deceased members who have paid their annual subscription for three years or who are life members.

The directors desire to bring to the notice of the members of the medical profession, especially the younger, the advantages of joining the society. Membership is open to any registered practitioner who at the time of his election is resident within a twenty-mile radius from Charing Cross. Should any member remove beyond the limits of the society he nevertheless continues to be a member. The annual subscription is two guineas; every member who has paid this sum for twenty-five years becomes a member for life. Life membership may also be obtained by the payment of one sum, varying with the age of the applicant.

Further particulars and application forms may be obtained from the Secretary at the offices of the society, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, W.