

tend to prevent the onset of the original attack, and by dilating the arterioles, they relieve an overloaded heart.—*Lancet*, February 2, 1889.

SACCHARIN.

After the constant use of saccharin for over a year, DR. H. MACNAUGHTON JONES has never known any injurious effects to follow its exhibition, though several of his patients have substituted it for sugar altogether in their food.

The great mistake generally made with all preparations of saccharin is that the intensely sweetening property of saccharin is overlooked and too much is used, both for purposes of diet—as when it is added to tea or coffee—and when it is prescribed in mixtures, powders, etc.

It has been found useful in disguising the taste of quinine, muriated tincture of iron, antipyrin, salicylate of soda, salicin, the oils of copaiba and santal (either of these oils emulsified by the compound powder of almonds in which the acacia has been increased by twenty-five per cent. and the sugar replaced by an equivalent of saccharin, forms a mixture that is comparatively palatable, and owing to the antiseptic property of the saccharin it keeps much longer than one made in the other way); its utility in emulsions as a preservative is very great, and it is noteworthy in the case of cod-liver oil, guaiacum, hydrastis, cascara sagrada, and chloride of ammonium.

A palatable biscuit for diabetics may be made from gluten flour, 11.5; butter, 2.75; eggs, 8.5; saccharin, 0.01625 in each biscuit.—*Lancet*, February 2, 1889.

PROF. ATTFIELD, one of the editors of the last edition of the *British Pharmacopœia*, has been estimating the place of saccharin in pharmacy, and he has published some thirty galenical formulæ in which saccharin replaces sugar, either without altering the strength of the preparation in any way, or else so modifying it that the saccharinated compound may be termed “concentrated.” In the former case the place of syrup is taken by powdered tragacanth, or, in special instances, by gluten.

Prof. Attfield regards the advantages of saccharin as fourfold. It enables many medicinal confections, powders, and lozenges to be given in comparatively small bulk. It is able, by the intensity of its sweetness, to mask the nauseous taste of many drugs; it is not liable to ferment, and hence will yield permanent preparations in place of those made with sugar, which would frequently spoil, especially if submitted to high temperatures in transport. Lastly, the advantage of “sweet,” but not “harmfully sweet,” is once more urged. The slight solubility of saccharin has been so often remarked upon that good service is rendered by the description of a form of “soluble saccharin,” and by the formula for a simple solution of saccharin of the same degree of sweetness as the syrups of the *British Pharmacopœia*. The nomenclature adopted for the various formulæ is admittedly open to serious objection, owing to the confusion likely to arise between saccharium and saccharine.—*Lancet*, January, 1889.

MYRTOL AS A DISINFECTANT.

PROF. EICHHORST is of opinion that myrtol will leave all other disinfectants in the background in safety and quickness of action. Myrtol is repre-

sented by that part of myrtol oil which comes over between 160° and 170°. It is a clear fluid of aromatic and penetrating odor, which can be conveniently administered in gelatine capsules. French authors have recommended it in bronchial catarrh, and scattered observations have been made on its disinfecting properties; but a methodical use of this disinfecting substance has not been made, and it is not mentioned in various works on therapeutics.

After taking only one gelatine capsule the breath smells of myrtol within an hour, and the effect lasts from twenty-four to forty-eight hours; but in order to subdue putrid processes, two capsules, each containing two and a half grains, were usually given every two hours. The appetite improves under its use, and the expectoration and breath lose all offensive odor with remarkable quickness. The expectoration diminishes under its use, and the patient feels better. It is not considered to possess a specific action against the tubercle bacillus.—*London Medical Record*, December 20, 1888.

To act as a deodorizer and disinfectant in bronchitis with offensive expectoration and gangrene of the lungs, one may give two or three capsules every two hours, though with three capsules anorexia may follow. In some cases, after using only a few capsules, the offensive odor of the breath and expectoration disappears.—*Therapeutische Monatshefte*, January, 1889.

OUR EXAGGERATED ESTIMATE OF THE VALUE OF BEEF-TEA.

In a paper presented at the meeting of the British Medical Association, last summer, by THOMAS LAFFAN, the value of beef-tea is viewed from a double standpoint. First, as a nutrient; and, second, as a mere stimulant and flavorer. It is in the first category that it has been placed by a large number of the profession. Liebig states that the greatest care is taken to exclude from his extract all fibrin, gelatine, albumen, and fat. He further adds, that its component parts do not give strength where there is none, and that to extractives and salts is due all the value it possesses; that it is to be classed with tea and coffee; and that it neither economizes carbon for our temperature nor nitrogen for the sustenance of our tissues. As to the difference between ordinary beef-tea and his extract of meat, he merely claims for the latter that it contains less water than the former.

We have in beef-tea kreatine, kreatinine, carmine, inosite, and other quarternary products, which so entirely resemble, or are so nearly allied to those found in urine, that their small value hardly admits of question; and it is not a matter for surprise that there should be so striking a family resemblance in odor between the two. The saline matters alone, plus the hot fluid, are, therefore, left to play the most considerable, if not the only, rôle in the value of beef-tea.

Dr. Hassall, long ago, showed that 14½ pounds would be required to yield beef-tea enough to supply the nitrogenous daily waste of one individual, calculating that such waste amounts to 512 grains of urea and 21 of uric acid daily.

Experiments made on dogs have brought out the remarkable fact that they die sooner when fed exclusively on Liebig's extract than when left unfed.

There are three leading methods for manufacturing the article under discussion.