

[Extract from the *British Medical Journal* of the 27th July, 1907, page 209.]

THE COMPOSITION OF CERTAIN SECRET REMEDIES.

OBESITY CURES.

Trilene Tablets.

Supplied by the Trilene Manufacturing Company, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London. Price, 2s. 6d. per box, containing 66 tablets.

A little booklet is enclosed with the package, containing testimonials, directions, &c.; also a small circular giving instructions as to diet, with the addition—

"We desire to say that such precautions are not indispensable by any means, but we formulate the above for the guidance of those in whom any peculiarity of Constitution may render such care salutary, and to promote rapidity of cure."

The directions are,—

"Three of the tablets three times a day 10 minutes before meals, either dissolved on the tongue or taken as pills. (*No change of diet being essential.*)"

It is also added,—

"The present supply lasts one week, in which time the weight begins to lessen, but a marked change in appearance naturally occupies *several weeks* to effect."

Two separate packages of the tablets were obtained for analysis at an interval of several weeks; in the first supply the tablets were of a dirty-white colour and contained no dye, but in the second they were bright yellow, and contained a yellow dye, which appeared to be one of the coal-tar colours, in addition to the ingredients previously found. The average weight of one tablet is 0.9 gr., and they were found to contain 87 per cent. of sugar, 2.4 per cent. of moisture, and 0.5 per cent. of ash; about three-quarters of the remainder was starch, principally potato-starch, but with a little maize. The residual 2 or 3 per cent. was a gelatinous substance showing no marked reactions or characters, and exhibiting only traces of cell-tissue when examined microscopically. Analysis of the ash showed it to contain sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, chloride, sulphate, and phosphate; these are the constant constituents of the ash of extract of *Fucus vesiculosus*; an aqueous extract of the tablets contained a small quantity of mucilage similar to that yielded by the same drug. By taking some *Fucus vesiculosus* in the wet state, pounding it to a pulp, and boiling it, a material was obtained agreeing with the gelatinous substance from the tablets, and there appears no ground for doubting the identity of the two. Careful search was made for alkaloids and other substances in small quantity, but without any being found. The formula thus becomes—

<i>Fucus vesiculosus</i> , in pulp	...	...	3 per cent. (dry weight).
Starch	...	...	7 "
Sugar	...	...	87 "
Water	...	...	3 "
Yellow dye	...	...	q.s.

Estimated cost of ingredients (sixty-six tablets), $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Hargreaves's Reducing Wafers.

Supplied by F. Hargreaves, 324 Coldharbour Lane, Brixton, S.W. Price, 1s. 1½d. per box, containing twenty-one. A circular enclosed with the box gives a number of testimonials, with directions, &c., and the following are extracts from it:—

"Purely vegetable. Contain nothing harmful. Can be taken at any time with perfect safety. Dose: Three wafers daily. One after Breakfast, Dinner, and Supper. If Supper is not taken, one after Tea instead. May be dissolved on the tongue or taken as pills. No change in diet necessary."

"The supply sent herewith lasts one week, in which time the Fat commences to get less. In most cases, however, to complete a cure takes about seven weeks, therefore clients should now send for the further six weeks' treatment."

The "wafers" are really compressed tablets of the ordinary shape, coated with French chalk, and coloured pink externally with eosin. After removing the coating the average weight of the tablets is 2.4 gr.; they consist of substances of "extract" nature, with about 10 per cent. of powdered liquorice. Analysis of the ash showed all the constituents of the ash of extract of *Fucus vesiculosus*, and other tests indicated this extract to form about one-half of the tablet; the other constituent (or constituents), also of "extract" nature, showed no reactions or properties by which it could be identified, and it is probably present merely as excipient.

Allan's Anti-Fat.

Supplied by the Botanic Medicine Company, Buffalo, New York, and London, England. Price, 6s. 6d. a bottle, containing 6½ fluid ounces. On the wrapper appear the words,—

"Purely vegetable. Perfectly harmless. Always efficacious."

Also,—

"We call special attention to the efficacy of our Anti-Fat in the cure of that distressing complaint—indigestion or dyspepsia. It acts solely upon the food in the stomach, regulating and putting the liver and discharging organs in good working-order."

A circular is enclosed with the bottle entitled, "How to get Lean without Starvation," from which the following extracts are taken:—