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Preparation of conia, the alkali of the conium maculatum

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decomposes the salt and reduces the oxide, the metal of which floats on the fluid in the form of a brilliant metallic pellicle.

The solutions of palladium, whether in nitric or in muriatic acid, or in aqua regia, require only a slight excess of acid to possess rather a yellowish brown colour, than a reddish one, with a styptic and metallic taste; they mix with water in all proportions without becoming turbid; when neutral, or with only a slight excess of acid, they are decomposed by water into sub- and super-salts.—*Ibid.*

PREPARATION OF CONIA, THE ALKALI OF THE CONIUM MACULATUM. BY M. BRANDES.

The best method of obtaining this alkali is to digest the fresh herb in alcohol during some days, afterwards evaporating the filtered alcohol, agitating the residuum with water, and treating this mixture either with alumina, magnesia, or oxide of lead; the whole is to be evaporated to dryness, and the residuum obtained treated with a mixture of alcohol and æther, which, when again evaporated, leaves the *conia*. This substance, which was discovered and also named by M. Peschier, possesses very marked alkaline properties. According to M. Giseke, the aqueous solution forms, with the tincture of iodine, an abundant reddish precipitate; it renders tincture of galls slightly brown, precipitates muriate of zinc and nitrate of mercury of a dirty yellow; renders carbonate of potash and soda slightly turbid; gives a brown colour to muriate of platina; and produces a white precipitate with the nitrates of silver and barytes, the acetates of barytes and lead, muriate of lime and lime-water.

Half a grain of conia is sufficient to kill a rabbit; the symptoms which occur resemble those produced by strychnia.—*Ibid.*

ON PYROPHORUS.

M. Gay-Lussac, in forming this substance, used calcined lamp-black instead of honey or flour, usually employed. Potash-alum heated with this form of carbon, gave at first carbonic acid and sulphurous gas, and nearly in equal volumes; afterwards carbonic acid was obtained nearly pure, and at last it was mixed with oxide of carbon, and this eventually prevailed. The pyrophorus so formed burnt readily. M. Gay-Lussac is of opinion that carbon is not necessary to the combustion: he made a mixture of nearly 75 parts of alum, and 3·33 of lamp-black, or 1 atom of the former and 3·5 atoms of the latter; and this mixture, when calcined, at nearly a white heat, gave a reddish-brown product, containing no traces of carbon, but it burnt very readily, and left a grayish-white residuum. Alum is not essential to the preparation. Sulphate of magnesia produces the same effect; sulphuret of potassium alone does not, however, inflame spontaneously in mass; and it occurred to M. Gay-Lussac, that alumina or magnesia acted merely by dividing the sulphuret; that this was the case was proved by substituting charcoal for them, and though the compound obtained, by using 27·3 of sulphate of potash, or 1 atom and 7·5 of lamp-black, or 4 atoms agglutinated

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