

The effect of even minute quantities, such as the dairymen began to employ in the preservation of milk (1:20,000), has been shown to be a harmful one, in the long run, at all events. Whether this is due to its influence on the proteids of the milk or upon the enzymes of the digestive tract, is not rendered quite clear as yet, but that digestion is interfered with, particularly the pancreatic digestion of albumen, is determined with certainty.

The above enumeration of some of the dangers of formal shows that the accidental swallowing of the drug is perhaps the greatest, particularly as the outcome of any case differs very much in different individuals and under different circumstances. Even the prompt medical aid given in the first case cited above failed to avert death, and the careful guarding of this drug from coming into the hands of the inexperienced or the irresponsible devolves upon every one in charge of laboratories, factories, farms, hospitals and other places where formal is used. Every bottle or other receptacle containing formal should be distinctly labelled 'Poison.' A few words, in conclusion, on the initial treatment of a case of acute formal poisoning may be found useful. The strong affinity of formaldehyd for ammonia gives a hint of therapeutic value.* The aromatic spirits of ammonia in doses of from one half to two fluid drachms, or even somewhat more, according to the amount of formal swallowed; or the liquor ammonii acetatis (spirit of Mindererus) in half-ounce doses, should be taken immediately as an antidote for the local effects. A physician should, of course, be sent for. Vomiting should be promoted, and the stomach washed out several times through a tube. The constitutional symptoms of depression of the vital functions must be met by the use of stimulants such as strychnine or caffeine. The patient must remain in the recumbent position, and external heat, by means of hot-water bottles, or by frequent lukewarm baths, should be applied. Demulcent drinks in small quantities frequently given allay the

irritation. Food can not be taken for some time.
E. A. SPITZKA.

QUOTATIONS.

THE AMERICAN METHOD OF APPOINTING UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS.*

I AM wrestling at the moment with a mass of correspondence which has accumulated during an eighteen weeks' absence in America. Among the letters demanding my immediate attention are several from friends requesting 'testimonials' regarding their fitness to fill professorships which are now vacant. These applications bring into sharp relief important differences between the old country and the new, in point of academic etiquette or custom. I think that the principle involved is a matter of public concern. The superiority of the new country's practice in the matter of appointing academic officers is, to my mind, so manifest that I am sanguine enough to believe that dissemination of knowledge about the newer system will lead at no distant date to the abrogation of the older.

In America I visited a score of the leading universities, including such veteran foundations as Harvard, Yale and Princeton, and such modern institutions as Johns Hopkins, Cornell and Chicago. Among many other topics which I discussed with university presidents and professors of standing was the mode in which vacancies in the various faculties were supplied. The method in universal vogue on the other side of the Atlantic is entirely unlike the usage familiar on this side, though there are resemblances between the American method and that employed by ministers of the crown in nominating regius professors.

Appointments to all vacant offices in an American university are made by the president, on what may be regarded for practical purposes as his sole authority or responsibility. (At the same time the president's action is always liable to control or check by boards of trustees or regents, who are usually sagacious men of position in the professions or in commerce.) As soon as a vacancy arises in

* Bastedo, article, 'Formaldehyd,' in 'Buck's Ref. Handbook of the Medical Sciences,' 1902.

* From the *London Times*.