This physician has given urea in diabetes, but without success. The composition of morbid urine has not varied; but we may use urea to replace the other diuretics when they begin to lose their effect by too long continuance.

MEDICINAL EMPLOYMENT.

Urea has been given in distilled water sweetened with sugar; it may be given to the extent of several *gros;* it will be proper to commence by giving but 25 or 30 grains.

OIL OF EUPHORBIA LATHYRIS.

Euphorbia Lathyris, known under the name of epurge (spurge), is an indigenous annual plant. It contains like all the Euphorbiœ an irritating and caustic juice. Its seeds have lately been proposed as substitutes for ipecacuanha. Dr. Carlo Calderini[1] obtained an oil from the seeds of this plant, which may be used with advantage for the oil of croton tiglium, and which like it acts in a very small dose.

PROCESS FOR OBTAINING THE OIL.

When the seeds are very ripe, they are to be dried and separated from the black ones which will turn

[1] Giornale di Farmacia Chimica. Anno 1824. f. 553.

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rancid, the oil is obtained by simple pressure: 14 *onces* of seeds yield six *onces* of very pure oil [m].

PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL PROPERTIES OF THE OIL OF EUPHORBIA LATHYRIS.

This oil very much resembles castor oil; it has the same colour, it is not quite so dense, it is void of odour, is not acrid, nor has it an unpleasant flavour, it is very transparent.

With time, and especially if the weather be warm, it becomes turbid and rancid, then it has a pungent taste. It burns with a beautiful white flame, without producing smoke; it does not dissolve in alcohol even when highly rectified; it forms soap with the alkalis.

ACTION UPON THE ANIMAL SYSTEM.

The action of this oil is purgative, its effect is very certain and prompt: it is to be considered, says the Italian author, as a very mild purgative: it does not produce vomiting, colic, or tenesmus; it may be administered even in dysenteries, when there is irritation in the intestinal canal, with as much benefit as the pulp of tamarinds.

CASES IN WHICH IT MAY BE ADMINISTERED.

It has been employed in quotidian gastric fever, in dysentery, even where there were marked symptoms of abdominal irritation; and when this

[m] The oil of Euphorb. Lathyr. is kept by Mr. Noakes, Oxford-street.

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disease was attended by derangement of the prima via, in slight anasarca consequent to intermittent fever, and in fact in all cases in which it is desirable to purge gently, and with a small dose of medicine.

MODE OF PRESCRIBING.

The dose of the oil of spurge for adults is from four to eight drops.

To children of two or three years of age a dose of three drops in chocolate. To very irritable subjects an amulsion may be given made with eight drops of the oil, some aromatic water, and syrup of orange-peel, this has in such cases produced very good effects.

Water sweetened with sugar forms a very good vehicle for the oil.

LACTUCARIUM.

The lactucarium of Dr. Duncan, of Edinburgh, such as is prepared by Mr. Probart of London [n], and the thridace [o] of Dr. Francois, are nothing more than the white viscid juice of the garden lettuce (lactuca sativa). The extract is made at the time the plant flowers, and without heat. For some years this has been employed in England, and its properties are described by Dr. Paris in

[n] See Paris's Pharmacologia, Vol. II. page 230. 6th ed.

[o] θριδαξ, lettuce.

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