



SOME OF THE NOMENCLATURE OF PHARMACOGNOSY

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The following remarks concerning some of the general terms used in pharmacognosy are offered with the hope that they may serve to help in the more specific application of these terms. A variation in usage has been noted, and it is thought that an attempt at clarification might be desirable.

One new term, "antibacter," is introduced and a different interpretation for "pharmaceutical serum" is suggested. This has been done because of the apparent confusion and inconsistencies in the terms "antitoxin," "serum," and "antibody."

- ANIMAL DRUG**—a drug derived from an animal. Is there any brief for the term "biologicals" since both plants and animals are biological?
- ANTIBACTER**—a substance, elaborated by an organism, capable of inhibiting or killing bacteria. A group term including the specific terms bacteriolysin, bacteriotropin, agglutinin, and precipitin.
- ANTIBODY**—a substance, elaborated by an organism, antagonistic to toxin, bacteria, or virus. A group term for antibacter, antitoxin and antiviral.
- ANTIGEN**—a substance capable of inducing formation of antibody when introduced into an organism. A group term including toxin, toxoid, bacteria, and virus.
- ANTITOXIN**—a substance, elaborated by an organism, capable of neutralizing toxin.
- ANTIVIRUS**—a substance, elaborated by an organism, capable of inhibiting or killing virus.
- CHEMICAL DRUG**—a drug of known chemical composition.
- COMMON NAME**—a popular designation. It may be regional, national, or universal. Though it may refer either to an organism or a derived drug, it must be borne in mind that these are not always interchangeable.
- CRUDE DRUG**—a drug composed of many chemical compounds generally in much the same relationship as they existed in nature. Fixed and volatile oils would be included.
- DRUG**—any substance or mixture of substances which may be used for the cure, prevention or mitigation of disease in man or other animals. This is similar to the legal definition in this country, but differs in the use of the term "may." It hardly seems that intent should play a part in deciding whether a substance is a drug. Also the reference to the U. S. P. and N. F. makes the legal definition a national one.
- DRUG ANIMAL**—an animal which may furnish one or more drugs.
- DRUG PLANT**—a plant from which a drug or drugs may be obtained.
- NORMAL SERUM**—serum from the blood of a healthy animal.
- OFFICIAL TITLE**—a designation for a drug given by an accepted book of standards. This is a group name which in specific use becomes U. S. P. title, B. P. title, D. A. title, etc. These in turn may either be in Latin, or in the national tongue.
- PHARMACEUTICAL ANTIBACTER**—a standardized preparation of antibacter.
- PHARMACEUTICAL ANTIGEN**—a standardized preparation of antigen.
- PHARMACEUTICAL ANTITOXIN**—a standardized preparation of antitoxin.
- PHARMACEUTICAL ANTIVIRUS**—a standardized preparation of antiviral.
- PHARMACEUTICAL SERUM**—a preparation of normal serum.
- PHARMACEUTICAL TOXIN**—a standardized preparation of toxin.
- PHARMACEUTICAL VIRUS**—a standardized preparation of living virus.
- PLANT DRUG**—a drug derived from a plant. This is probably preferable to either vegetable drug, or botanical drug.
- PHARMACOGNOSY**—the history of simple drugs derived from contemporary plants and animals. "History" is used here in the sense of a narrative of connected events. "Simple drugs" (see below). "Derived" includes not only morphological parts, but separated constituents and developed products as well. "Contemporary" excludes products of prehistoric origin, whose study is principally

chemical. Omitting mineral drugs makes pharmacognosy a biological science.

SERUM—the clear amber portion of blood separated by coagulation.

SCIENTIFIC NAME—an authoritative designation applied to an organism. Usually a Latin or latinized term.

SIMPLE DRUG—an uncompounded drug. Thus though a dried root may represent many chemical substances, it is a simple drug until it is compounded with another.

SPP.—abbreviation for the plural of "species."

SYNONYM—a name of like value. Thus one scientific name would be a synonym for another, one common name the synonym for another, and so forth. But it seems improper to suggest that a common name be a synonym for a scientific name. However, in the names of drugs, it seems reasonable that the official Latin title, and the official national title would be synonymous with each other, and with those in other accepted books of standards describing the same drug.

TOXIN—a poisonous substance.

TOXOID—a modified toxin.

VACCINE—a standardized preparation of attenuated or killed bacteria or virus.

VIRUS—a reproductive ultramicroscopic body. Generic term for bacteriophage and pathogenic virus.

