

CORRESPONDENCE

This department is provided for the publication of informal communications which are of interest, whether because they are informative or are suggestive and stimulating, and to serve as an open forum for discussions of matters of interest.

To the EDITOR:¹

We are now on our way north from Rio de Janeiro, having enjoyed our visit in South America immensely. In Sao Paulo, by far the richest state in Brazil and with incredibly fertile soil, they have done remarkable work in the past two years. They have built five new leprosaria scattered over the State which compare very favorably with the Eversley Childs one at Cebu, in the Philippines—they have recreation grounds and halls, movie theatres, etc. About 3,500 patients are in isolation so far, and they spend about 775,000 U. S. dollars per annum.

We visited the leprosy station in the city, where Dr. Sales Gomez is in charge, and they were very cordial. One of the men hopes to go to India and Cullion in a year or so. In their chemical plant (Mr. Lineu Prestes, chemist), they make various preparations for experimental purposes—cold process, unpurified *Hydnocarpus wightiana* ethyl esters; the distilled esters with and without iodine, by our process; and the esters with sodium iodo-bismuthate. They use wightiana oil from Ernakulum, India, and anthelminitica from Bangkok.

They do not use *Carpotroche* at all extensively in Brazil, though I was told that it is used to some extent. Wightiana oil is used most. At the Oswaldo Cruz Institute in Rio de Janeiro, where Dr. Chagas and Dr. de Souza-Araujo were very kind, I learned that the cost of the native carpotroche seeds is very high. Their chemist, Dr. Felippi, gave me specimens of the oil, seeds, etc. The seeds are very small; I was told that I could get all I want at fifty cents (U. S.) a kilo. The oil is much thicker than wightiana oil, but like it keeps well, no free fatty acids precipitating after several years standing. Dr. Felippi said that he had analyzed it but had not published the results;

¹ This letter, though not intended for such use, is deemed of sufficient interest to be published here.—EDITOR.

hydnocarpic and chaulmoogric acids are present in equal amounts, with about 15 per cent of a mixture of lauric, palmitic and oleic acids.

He also told me that *Oncoba* grows in the Amazon belt right across to Peru, which I had not known.

They have a fine library of over 60,000 volumes at the Institute, and a good chemical laboratory, but they prepare their leprosy drugs in glass on a small scale. In Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro all the drugs are sent out in ampules only. The Institute people had advocated their production on a large scale in one central Federal plant instead of in State plants, for it would be cheaper, but for reasons that had nothing to do with economy this was not done.

H. I. COLE.

Gardiner, Oregon