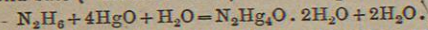


The writer is unable to say whether Wöhler's calomel has ever found its way anywhere into medicinal practice.

The Iodides.—The mercuric salt HgI_2 is produced in two ways, viz., first by mixing the two elementary components intimately and subjecting the mixture to sublimation, and secondly by precipitating corrosive sublimate solution with its exact equivalent of iodide of potassium. In the first case the salt is obtained in yellow crystals, which, on the slightest touch with a solid body, assume and then permanently retain a rich scarlet colour. The precipitation process at once yields the scarlet salt. The salt is insoluble in water, but soluble in alcohol and in iodide of potassium solution. The mercurous salt Hg_2I_2 is obtained by precipitating mercurous nitrate with iodide of potassium as a dirty-green powder insoluble in water. Both iodides are used medicinally.

The Sulphides.—Mercurous sulphide, Hg_2S , does not seem to exist. The mercuric salt, HgS , exists in two modifications, of which one is amorphous and has a black colour, while the other is crystalline and red. The black one is obtained by precipitation of solutions of mercuric salts with excess of sulphuretted hydrogen, or by direct synthesis. The right proportions of mercury and flowers of sulphur are rubbed together in a mortar until the whole is converted into a jet-black uniform powder. This preparation (the *æthiops inæneratis* of the pharmacist), however, is apt to be contaminated with uncombined sulphur and mercury. Application of a gentle heat causes exhaustive combination. The red sulphide, HgS , occurs in nature as *cinnabar*, and can be produced artificially from the black. The artificial preparation, known as *vermillion*, is highly valued as the most brilliant, stable, and innocuous of all mineral red pigments. Vermilion can be produced from the black sulphide in two ways, viz., first by sublimation, and secondly by treatment of it with fixed alkaline sulphide solution. According to Brunner, 100 parts of mercury are mixed intimately with 38 parts of flowers of sulphur, and the *æthiops* is digested, with constant agitation, in a solution of 25 parts of potash in 150 parts of water at $45^\circ C$. (the water lost by evaporation being constantly replaced), until the preparation has come up to its maximum of fire and brilliancy, which takes a good many hours. Purely sublimed vermilion has a comparatively dull colour, and must be manipulated with alkaline sulphide solution to give it the necessary fire. The action of the alkaline sulphide consists probably in this, that it dissolves successive instalments of the amorphous preparation and redeposits them in the crystalline form.

Mercuric Derivatives of Ammonia.—(1) Recently precipitated oxide HgO is digested, cold, in carbonic-acid-free ammonia, and the mixture allowed to stand for a few days. The liquor is then decanted off, and the precipitate washed with alcohol and then with ether, and dried over sulphuric acid. The product is a yellow solid base ("Millon's base") of the composition



It is insoluble in alcohol and in ether, and requires 18,000 parts of cold water for its solution. It readily unites with all acids, forming salts, which, as a rule, are insoluble in water. Hence all ordinary salt solutions, when shaken with the base, are decomposed with elimination of the base of the salt. Thus, for instance, even such salts as alkaline nitrates, chlorides, or sulphates are decomposed with formation of solutions of caustic alkali.

(2) A body $N_2Hg_4I_2 + 2H_2O$, *i.e.*, of the composition of the iodide corresponding to the oxide in (1), is produced as a brown precipitate when ammonia or an ammonia salt is added to a solution of mercuric iodide in iodide of potassium mixed with large excess of caustic potash or soda ("Nessler's reagent"). In very dilute solutions of ammonia Nessler's reagent produces only a brown or yellow coloration, which, however, is so intense that $\frac{1}{1000000}$ th of ammonia in about 50 cubic centimetres of liquid becomes clearly visible.

(3) The chloride $NH_2Hg \cdot Cl$ of the "ammonium" NH_2Hg is produced as an insoluble white precipitate when ammonia is added to a solution of corrosive sublimate. This substance is known in medicine as infusible white precipitate, in contradistinction to (4).

(4) The fusible white precipitate was at one time supposed to be identical with (3), and is obtained by boiling it with sal-ammoniac solution. Its composition is $NH_2HgCl + NH_4Cl = N_2H_6 \cdot Hg \cdot Cl_2$. **Analysis.**—Any ordinary solid mercury compound, when heated in a sublimation tube with carbonate of soda, yields a sublimate of metallic mercury, which, if necessary, needs only to be scraped together with a wooden spill to unite into visible globules. From any mercury-salt solution the metal is precipitated by digestion with a piece of bright copper-foil. The precipitated mercury forms a coating on the copper, which becomes silvery on being rubbed with a blotting paper. When the quicksilver copper is heated in a sublimation tube, it reassumes its red colour with formation of a sublimate of mercury.

Solutions of mercurous salts with hydrochloric acid give a white precipitate of calomel, which, after filtration, is easily identified by its becoming jet-black on treatment with ammonia. From mercuric solutions hydrochloric acid precipitates nothing; but stannous chloride, in its twofold capacity as a chloride and a reducing agent,

yields a precipitate of calomel. On addition of an excess of reagent the precipitate becomes grey through conversion into finely divided quicksilver. Sulphuretted hydrogen, when added very gradually to an acid mercuric solution, gives at first an almost white precipitate, which, on addition of more and more reagent, assumes successively a yellow, orange, and at last jet-black colour. The black precipitate is HgS , which is identified by its great heaviness, and by its being insoluble in boiling nitric and in boiling hydrochloric acid. A mixture of the two (aqua regia) dissolves it as chloride.

Therapeutics of Mercury.

The use of mercury as a therapeutic agent is of comparatively recent date. To the Greeks and Romans its value was unknown, and the Arabian physicians only used it for skin affections. It was not till the middle of the 16th century that the special properties of mercury were fully appreciated, but since that time the metal has continued to hold a high though fluctuating value as a medicine. At first the metal in a finely divided state of in vapour was used; but very soon its various compounds were found to be endowed with powers even greater than those of the metal itself, and with the discovery of new compounds the number of mercurial medicines has largely increased.

The preparations now in use may be thus classified. (1) Of the preparations containing metallic mercury the chief members are blue pill (*pluvis hydrargyri*), grey powder (*hydrargyrum cum creta*), and blue ointment (*unguentum hydrargyri*). The first consists of mercury, liquorice root, and confection of roses, the second of mercury and chalk, the third of mercury, suet, and lard. The power of the three preparations seems to depend on the fine state of its subdivision of the mercury they contain; mercury in its ordinary liquid state seems devoid of medicinal properties. It is thought by some that the fine subdivision of the metal leads to the formation of a little oxide, and that the efficacy of the preparations in part depends on this. (2) Three oxides of mercury are employed in medicine,—the red, from which is made red precipitate ointment (*unguentum hydrargyri oxydi rubri*), the yellow, an allotropic form of the red, and the black oxide. The yellow and black oxides suspended in lime water form respectively yellow and black wash (*lotio flava* and *lotio nigra*). (3) The chlorides of mercury form a very important group: calomel (*hydrargyri subchloridum*) is a white heavy powder; corrosive sublimate (*hydrargyri perchloridum*) is a heavy crystalline substance. (4) Two iodides are used medicinally; they are known from their colour as the green and red iodides. (5) Nitrate of mercury enters into the composition of a powerful caustic known as the acid nitrate of mercury. It is also the active principle of citrine ointment (*unguentum hydrargyri nitratis*). (6) In this class only ammoniated mercury and its ointment commonly known as white precipitate ointment, are contained. Of the many compounds not included in the above classification the oleate and albuminate are the most important.

Mercurial preparations are largely employed as external applications. Several of them are potent agents for the destruction of the lower forms of animal life, and hence are employed to destroy parasites having their habitat in skin, hair, and clothing. The white and red precipitate ointments are especially effective in the destruction of pediculi, and blue ointment is occasionally used for the same purpose. Corrosive sublimate is, however, the most energetic of the mercurial parasiticides, and recent observations seem to show that it is superior to almost all other substances as a germ destroyer. It is sometimes used to get rid of ringworm. It should be remembered that corrosive sublimate is a powerful irritant to the skin, and also an active poison.

Acid nitrate of mercury is a caustic, and by it warts and small growths are sometimes removed; it is also one of the caustics occasionally applied to prevent the spread of lupus.

In skin diseases mercurial preparations are largely used, especially in some forms of eczema. A few grains of the red oxide or of ammoniated mercury in an ounce of zinc ointment are often found of great service in this ailment; citrine ointment is also useful.

Calomel ointment is not irritating, but rather tends to soothe. It is therefore sometimes applied to irritable rashes; in pruritus and it is of special value. Mercurial preparations are not usually found of benefit in scaly eruptions. In agne a weak solution of corrosive sublimate is often most effective.

Preparations of mercury are often used to heal ulcers, especially those of syphilitic origin. Black wash is one of the commonest applications for this purpose. The red oxide ointment is at times employed to stimulate indolent ulcers, and it is capable of removing exuberant granulations (proud flesh), which sometimes retard the healing of wounds.

Mercury is largely used externally to promote the absorption of inflammatory products, especially in the neighbourhood of joints. The blue ointment is frequently employed for this purpose, more rarely a plaster containing mercury or a mercurial liniment. For effecting the absorption of goitre (Derbyshire neck) the ointment of the red iodide is often relied on, especially in India, where it is customary to expose the patient's neck to the sun after rubbing it with the ointment. In enlargements of the liver and spleen the application of mercurial ointment sometimes seems to promote reduction in size.

Taken internally in continued doses, mercury produces a peculiar effect known as salivation. First a metallic taste is experienced; this is followed by soreness of the gums, an undue flow of saliva, and fetor of the breath. Further administration of the drug may increase greatly the salivary flow, and also lead to swelling of the tongue, ulceration of the mouth, and even disease of the jaw-bone. At the same time the blood becomes impoverished, and feverishness with loss of flesh occurs. A single large dose—rarely too a single small dose—may produce some of the above symptoms. They may also follow the inhalation of the metal or its compounds, or their absorption through the skin. The long-continued inhalation of the vapour of mercury acts likewise on the nervous system, causing a peculiar kind of trembling. Mercurial tremor is sometimes seen in looking-glass makers, often in those who work in quicksilver mines.

Internally mercury is chiefly given for two purposes—(1) to check inflammation and cause the absorption of the products it gives rise to, and (2) to antagonize the syphilitic virus and remove the evils it causes. Some years ago the belief in the power of mercury to control inflammation was almost universal, and it was largely administered in almost all inflammatory affections, but of late it has been much less used, both because it seems doubtful whether it has really the power it was once supposed to have and because of the possibility of evil results from its continued use. In peritonitis and iritis it is still often employed, small doses of calomel being given. Not unfrequently too it is administered in pericarditis and hepatitis, but in pneumonia, pleurisy, and most other inflammatory affections its use is now discarded by many physicians. As an antidote to the syphilitic poison it is still held in high esteem, though opinions vary much as to the extent of its power. There can be little doubt that, given in an early stage of the disorder, it minimizes the secondary symptoms; but it cannot be relied on to prevent their occurrence. It aids in removing the secondary symptoms, and tends to the avoidance of tertiary manifestations, which nevertheless sometimes occur even when mercury has been freely given. The custom of giving mercury till profuse salivation is established has long been abandoned; the aim now is so to give it as to prevent salivation occurring; for this purpose blue pill, calomel, and corrosive sublimate are given in very small doses, but if the gums become tender the dose is decreased or the administration stopped.

Mercurial treatment is sometimes carried out by rubbing the blue ointment into the skin, sometimes by exposing the patient to the fumes of calomel; syphilitic eruptions are often treated by such fumigation. More rarely mercury is introduced by injecting the albuminate or some other preparation under the skin or by means of suppositories. In children grey powder is generally used when mercurial treatment is required. Children bear mercury well.

Blue pill, calomel, and grey powder are often used as purgatives, and a power of promoting the secretion of bile is attributed to them. Experimentally it has not been proved that they stimulate the liver functions, but there is good reason for believing that they promote the expulsion of bile from the body. Grey powder is especially valued as a mild and efficient aperient for children, and is often given in the early stage of diarrhoea to expel the irritating contents of the bowels.

The use of calomel in tropical dysentery, once very prevalent, has within the last few years been abandoned. (D. J. L.)

MERGANSER, a word originating with Gesner (*Hist. Animalium*, iii. p. 129) in 1555, and for a long while used in English as the general name for a group of fish-eating Ducks possessing great diving powers, and forming the genus *Mergus* of Linnaeus, now regarded by ornithologists as a Subfamily, *Merginae*, of the Family *Anatidae*. The

Mergansers have a long, narrow bill, with a small but evident hook at the tip, and the edges of both mandibles beset by numerous horny denticulations, whence in English the name of "Saw-bill" is frequently applied to them. Otherwise their structure does not much depart from the Anatine or Fuliguline type. All the species bear a more or less developed crest or tuft on the head. Three of them, *Mergus merganser* or *castor*, *M. serrator*, and *M. albellus*, are found over the northern parts of the Old World, and of these the first two also inhabit North America, which has besides a fourth species, *M. cucullatus*, said to have occasionally visited Britain. *M. merganser*, commonly known as the Goosander, is the largest species, being nearly as big as the smaller Geese, and the adult male in breeding-attire is a very beautiful bird, conspicuous with his dark glossy-green head, rich salmon-coloured breast, and the upper part of the body and wings black and white. This full plumage is not assumed till the second year, and in the meantime, as well as in the post-nuptial dress, the male much resembles the female, having, like her, a reddish-brown head, the upper parts greyish-brown, and the lower dull white. In this condition the bird is often known as the "Dun Diver." This species breeds abundantly in many parts of Scandinavia, Russia, Siberia, and North America, and of late years has been found to do so in Scotland, usually making its nest in the stump of a hollow tree or under a slab of rock. *M. serrator*, commonly called the Red-breasted Merganser, is a somewhat smaller bird; and, while the fully-dressed male wants the delicate hue of the lower parts, he has a gorget of rufous mottled with black, below which is a patch of white feathers, broadly edged with black. The male at other times and the female always much resemble the preceding. It is more numerous than the Goosander, with a somewhat more southern range, and is not so particular in selecting a sheltered site for its nest. Both these species have the bill and feet of a bright reddish-orange, while *M. albellus*, known as the Smew, has these parts of a lead colour, and the breeding plumage of the adult male is white, with quaint crescentic markings of black, and the flanks most beautifully vermiculated—the female and male in undress having a general resemblance to the other two already described—but the Smew is very much smaller in size, and, so far as is known, it invariably makes its nest in a hollow tree, as ascertained first by Wolley (*Ibis*, 1859, pp. 69 *et seq.*). This last habit is shared by *M. cucullatus*, the Hooded Merganser of North America, in size intermediate between *M. albellus* and *M. serrator*, the male of which is easily recognizable by his broad semicircular crest, bearing a fan-shaped patch of white, and his elongated subscapulars of white edged with black. The conformation of the tracheæ in the male of *M. merganser*, *M. serrator*, and *M. cucullatus* is very like that of the Ducks of the genus *Clangula*, but *M. albellus* has a less exaggerated development more resembling that of the ordinary *Fuligula*.¹ From the southern hemisphere two species of *Mergus* have been described, *M. octosetaceus* or *brasilianus*, Vieillot (*N. Dict. d'Hist. Naturelle*, ed. 2, xiv. p. 222; *Gal. des Oiseaux*,

¹Hybrids between, as is presumed, *M. albellus* and *Clangula glaucion*, the common Golden-eye, have been described and figured (Eimbeck, *Isis*, 1831, 300, tab. iii.; Brehm, *Naturgesch. aller Vög. Deutschlands*, p. 930; Naumann, *Vög. Deutschlands*, xii. p. 194, frontispiece; Kjerbølling, *Jour. für Ornithologie*, 1853, Extrahft, p. 29, Naumannia, 1853, p. 327, *Ornithol. Danica*, tab. lv., suppl. tab. 29) under the names of *Mergus anataricus*, *Clangula angustirostris*, and *Anas (Clangula) mergoides*, as though they were a distinct species; but the remarks of M. de Selys-Longchamps (*Bull. Ac. Sc. Bruxelles*, 1845, pt. ii. p. 354, and 1856, pt. ii. p. 21) leave little room for doubt as to their origin, which, when the cryptogamic habit and common range of their putative parents, the former unknown to the author last named, is considered, will seem to be still more likely.

tom. ii. p. 209, pl. 283), inhabiting South America, of which but few specimens have been obtained, having some general resemblance to *M. serrator*, but much more darkly coloured, and *M. australis*, Hombron and Jacquemont (*Ann. Sc. Nat. Zoologie*, ser. 2, xvi. p. 320; *Voy. au Pol Sud, Oiseaux*, pl. 31, fig. 2), as yet known only by the unique example in the Paris Museum procured by the French Antarctic expedition in the Auckland Islands. This last species may perhaps be found to visit New Zealand, and should certainly be looked for there.

Often associated with the Mergansers is the genus *Merganetta*, the so-called Torrent-Ducks of South America, of which three species are said to exist; but they possess spiny tails and have their wings armed with a spur. Whether they should be referred to the *Merginae* or the *Erismaturinae*—the Spiny-tailed Ducks proper—is a question that further investigation must decide. (A. N.)

MERGUI, a district of British Burmah, between 9° 58' and 13° 24' N. lat. It forms the southernmost district of the Tenasserim division, and is bounded on the N. by Tavoy, E. and S. by Siam, and W. by the Bay of Bengal, with an area of 7810 square miles. Two principal ranges cross Mergui from north to south, running almost parallel to each other for a considerable distance, with the Tenasserim river winding between them till it turns south and flows through a narrow rocky gorge in the westernmost range to the sea. Amongst these mountain ranges and their subsidiary spurs are several fertile plains, densely clothed with luxuriant vegetation. Indeed, the whole district, from the water's edge to the loftiest mountain on the eastern boundary, may be regarded as almost unbroken forest, only 73 square miles being under cultivation. The timber trees found towards the interior, and on the higher elevations, are of great size and beauty, the most valuable being teak, *then-gan* (*Hopea odorata*), *ka-gnyeng* (*Dipterocarpus tuberculatus*), &c. The coast-line of the district, studded with an archipelago of two hundred and seven islands, is much broken, and for several miles inland is very little raised above sea-level, and is drained by numerous muddy tidal creeks. Southwards of Mergui town it consists chiefly of low mangrove swamps alternating with small fertile rice plains. After passing the mangrove limits, the ground to the east gradually rises till it becomes mountainous, even to the banks of the rivers, and finally culminates in the grand natural barrier dividing British Burmah from Assam. The four principal rivers are the Tenasserim, Le-gnya, Pakchan, and Palouk, the first three being navigable for a considerable distance of their course. Coal is found in the district on the banks of the Tenasserim and its tributaries. Gold, copper, iron, and manganese are also found in various parts of the district.

From the notices of early travellers it appears that Mergui, when under Siamese rule, before it passed to the Burmese, was a rich and densely peopled country. On its occupation by the British in 1824-25 it was found to be almost depopulated—the result of border warfare and of the cruelties exercised by the Burmese conquerors. At that time the entire inhabitants only numbered 10,000; in 1876 they had increased to 51,846 (26,767 males and 25,079 females). Classified according to religion, there were—Buddhists, 48,750; Mohammedans, 2533; Hindus, 353; Christians and others, 210. The district contains only one town (Mergui) with more than 5000 inhabitants. Only 73 square miles of the district area were under cultivation in 1876, but this area is steadily though slowly increasing. The principal manufactures are sugar-boiling and tinsmelting. Mergui carries on a flourishing trade with Rangoon, Bassein, and the Straits Settlements. The chief exports consist of rice, rattans, torches, dried fish, areca-nuts, sesamum seeds, molasses, sea-slugs, edible birds' nests, and tin. The staple imports are piece goods, tobacco, cotton, earthenware, tea, and sugar. The imperial revenue in 1876 amounted to £18,208. The climate is remarkably healthy, the heat due to its tropical situation being moderated by land and sea breezes. The rainfall in 1876 amounted to 165½ inches. The prevalent diseases are simple and remittent fevers, bronchitis, rheumatism, and small-pox.

MERGUI, chief town of the above district, is situated on an island at the mouth of the Tenasserim river. The population (10,731 in 1876-77) consists of many races—Talaings, Burmese, Malays, Bengalis, Madrasis, Siamese, and Chinese. Considerable trade is carried on with other Burmese ports and the Straits Settlements. The harbour admits vessels drawing 18 feet of water.

MÉRIDA, a city of 7390 inhabitants (1877), in the province of Badajoz, Spain, lies about 36 miles by rail eastward from Badajoz, on the Madrid and Badajoz line, on a small eminence on the right bank of the Guadiana. It is connected by a branch line of rail with Llerena on the south-east. The population is mostly agricultural. The city owes its interest entirely to its Roman remains, which are numerous and extensive. Of these one of the most important is the bridge of 81 arches of granite, erected by Trajan; it is 2575 feet long, 26 feet broad, and 33 feet above the bed of the river; it was unfortunately seriously injured during the siege of Badajoz in 1812. Of the colossal wall that formerly surrounded the town all that remains is a fine fragment, built of dressed stone, on the spot formerly occupied by the castellum, and where the provisor of the order of Santiago afterwards had his residence (El Conventual). In the town are some relics of temples of Diana, Mars, Fortuna, Jupiter, and others; and the Arco de Santiago, 44 feet high, also dates from Trajan's time; it has unfortunately been stripped of its marble casing. Of the aqueduct from the laguna of Albuera thirty-seven enormous piers are still standing, with ten arches in three tiers built of brick and granite. To the east of the city is the circus, measuring some 1356 by 335 feet; the eight rows of seats still remain. Further eastward is the almost perfect theatre, and near it are the remains of the amphitheatre, or, as some prefer to call it, naumachia (Baño de los Romanos).

Augusta Emerita was built in 25 B.C. by the emeriti of the fifth and tenth legions who had served in the Cantabrian war under Augustus. It rose to great splendour and importance as the capital of Lusitania. During the Gothic period it became an episcopal see, and several provincial councils known to history were held there. It was taken by Músa in 711, and reconquered by Alphonso in 1228.

MÉRIDA, the capital of the Mexican state of Yucatan, stands in a great plain in the north of the peninsula, on a surface of limestone rock, about 25 miles from the port of Progreso on the Gulf of Mexico, with which it is connected by a railway opened in 1880. It is a well-built city, with broad streets and squares; and the flat-roofed stone houses, after the style introduced by the Spaniards, give a Moorish colour to the general view. Besides the cathedral, an imposing edifice of the 16th century, the bishop's palace, and the Government house (all of which are situated in the principal square), the most notable building is the Franciscan monastery (1547-1600), which once harboured within its high and turreted walls no fewer than two thousand friars, but has been allowed to fall into complete decay since their expulsion in 1820. For a long time Merida has had the reputation of being one of the principal seats of culture in Mexico; and it possesses, besides the ecclesiastical seminary, schools of law, medicine, and pharmacy, a literary institute, a public library, a theatre, and a considerable number of periodical publications. Commercially it has shared in the prosperity which Yucatan in recent years owes to the development of the Sisal hemp trade; and its manufactures embrace cotton goods, cigars, sugar, and rum. The population, estimated about 1840 as 25,000, was found in 1871 to number 33,025. The Mayas still form numerically the strongest element. Previous to the Spanish conquest the site of Merida was occupied by the Maya town of Tehoo, which contained so great a number of artificial stone-mounds that the new-comers had abundant material for all their buildings. The foundation of the

city dates from 1542, and it was made a bishopric in 1561. Compare Stephen's *Yuedan*.

MERIDEN, a city of the United States, in New Haven county, Connecticut, 18 miles from New Haven by rail. It is a busy manufacturing town; the population has increased from 3559 in 1850 to 7426, 10,495, and 18,340 in 1860, 1870, and 1880. The Britannia Company alone employs upwards of 1000 hands, and sends out every year nearly \$3,000,000 worth of Britannia metal and electroplated goods; and tin-ware, cutlery, brass-work, flint glass, guns, and woollen goods are also manufactured in the town. The State reform school had 307 inmates in 1880. A fortified tavern erected by Belcher in 1660 on the road between Boston and New Haven was the nucleus of Meriden; but the place was not incorporated as a town till 1866, and became a city in 1867.

MÉRIMÉE, PROSPER (1803-1870), novelist, archaeologist, essayist, and in all these capacities one of the greatest masters of French style during the century, was born at Paris on September 28, 1803, and died at Cannes on the 23d of the same month sixty-seven years later, having lived just long enough to know that ruin was threatening France. Not many details have been published in reference to his family, but his father seems to have been a man of position and competence. MÉRIMÉE had English blood in his veins on the mother's side, and was always considered, at least in France, to look and behave more like an Englishman than a Frenchman. He was educated for the bar, but entered the public service instead. A young man at the time of the romantic movement, he felt its influence strongly, though his peculiar temperament prevented him from joining any of the coteries of the period. This temperament was indeed exhibited by the very form and nature of the works in which he showed the influence of romanticism. Nothing was more prominent among the romantics than the fancy, as MÉRIMÉE himself puts it, for "local colour," the more unfamiliar the better. MÉRIMÉE exhibited this in an unusual way. In 1825 he published what purported to be the dramatic works of a Spanish lady, Clara Gazul, with a preface stating circumstantially how the supposed translator, one Joseph L'Estrange, had met the gifted poetess at Gibraltar. This was followed by a still more audacious and still more successful *supercherie*. In 1827 appeared a small book entitled *La Guzla* (the anagram of Gazul), and giving itself out as translated from the Illyrian of a certain Hyacinthe Maglanovich. This book, which has greater formal merit than *Clara Gazul*, is said to have taken in Sir John Bowring, a competent Slav scholar, the Russian poet Poushkin, and some German authorities, although not only had it no original, but, as MÉRIMÉE declares, a few words of Illyrian and a book or two of travels and topography were the author's only materials. In the next year appeared a short dramatic romance, *La Jacquerie*, in which all MÉRIMÉE's characteristics are visible—his extraordinary faculty of local and historical colour, his command of language, his grim irony, and a certain predilection for tragic and terrible subjects which was one of his numerous points of contact with the men of the Renaissance. This in its turn was followed by a still better piece, the *Chronique de Charles IX.*, which stands towards the 16th century much as the *Jacquerie* does towards the Middle Ages. All these works were to a certain extent second-hand, being either directly imitated or prompted by a course of reading on a particular subject. But they exhibited all the future literary qualities of the author save the two chiefest, his wonderfully severe and almost classical style, and his equally classical solidity and stateness of construction. For the latter there was not much opportunity in their subjects, and the former required a certain maturity and self-discipline which

MÉRIMÉE had not yet given to himself. These were, however, displayed fully in the famous Corsican story of *Colomba*, published in the momentous year 1830. This, all things considered, is perhaps MÉRIMÉE's best tale.

He had already obtained a considerable position in the civil service, and after the revolution of July he was *chef de cabinet* to two different ministers. He was then appointed to the more congenial post of inspector of historical monuments. MÉRIMÉE was a born archaeologist, combining linguistic faculty of a very unusual kind with the accurate scholarship which does not always accompany it, with remarkable historical appreciation, and with a sincere love for the arts of design and construction, in the former of which he had some practical skill. In his official capacity he published numerous reports, some of which, with other similar pieces, have been republished in his works. He also devoted himself to history proper during the latter years of the July monarchy, and published the numerous essays and works of no great length, chiefly on Spanish, Russian, and ancient Roman history. He did not, however, neglect novel writing during this period, and numerous short tales, almost without exception masterpieces, appeared, chiefly in the *Revue de Paris*. He travelled a good deal, both for his own amusement and on official errands; and in one of his journeys to Spain, about the middle of Louis Philippe's reign, he made an acquaintance destined to influence his future life not a little—that of Madame de Montijo, mother of the future empress Eugénie. MÉRIMÉE, though in manner and language the most cynical of men, was a devoted friend, and shortly before the accession of Napoleon III. he had occasion to show this. His friend Libri was accused of having stolen valuable manuscripts and books from French libraries, and MÉRIMÉE took his part so warmly that he was actually sentenced to and underwent fine and imprisonment. He had been elected of the Academy in 1844, and also of the Academy of Inscriptions, of which he was a prominent member. Between 1840 and 1850 he wrote more tales, the chief of which were *Arsène Guillot* and *Carmen*.

The empire made a considerable difference in MÉRIMÉE's life. He was not a very ardent politician, but all his sympathies were against democracy, and he had therefore no reason to object to the Bonapartist rule, especially as his habitual cynicism and his irreligious prejudices made legitimism distasteful to him. But the marriage of Napoleon III. with the daughter of Madame de Montijo at once enlisted what was always the strongest of MÉRIMÉE's sympathies—the sympathy of personal friendship—on the emperor's side. He was made a senator, and continued to exercise his archaeological functions; but his most important rôle was that of a constant and valued private friend of both the "master and mistress of the house," as he calls the emperor and empress in his letters. He was occasionally charged with a kind of irregular diplomacy, and once, in the matter of the emperor's *César*, he had to pay the penalty frequently exacted from great men of letters by their political or social superiors who are ambitious of literary reputation. But for the most part he was strictly the "ami de la maison." At the Tuileries, at Compiègne, at Biarritz, he was a constant though not always a very willing guest, and his influence over the empress was very considerable and was fearlessly exerted, though he used to call himself, in imitation of Scarron, "le bouffon de sa majesté." His occupations during the last twenty years of his life were numerous and important, though rather nondescript. He found, however, time for not a few more tales, of which more will be said presently, and for two correspondences, which are not the least of his literary achievements, while they have an extraordinary interest of matter. One of these consists