

Vires Vitales Sustinete.

TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

National Eclectic Medical Association.

FOR THE YEARS 1881-82.

INCLUDING THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL

MEETING, HELD AT THE CITY OF ST.

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Excerpted Papers on Botanical Medicine

NEW REMEDIES.

By CHARLES BAND, M. D., CRETE, NEBRASKA.

The history of medicine, during the present century has been characterized by a revolution in the methods of treating the sick, and by the introduction of a large variety of new drugs and agents as remedies for disease. The political changes in both hemispheres have not been more remarkable. The innovations of Homeopathic practice have done much to modify and ameliorate the old custom of giving prodigious doses; and indeed, it is the prevailing fashion to attribute to Homeopathy about all the improvements which have been effected. This, perhaps, is to be attributed to the fact that the leading Homeopaths have been scholarly men in other departments of learning, as well as in the sciences associated to medicine. This gave them prestige, and admitted them into fashionable and aristocratic society, from which the most energetic endeavors of "regular" exclusiveness could not dislodge them. Liberal education is a social force, which experience in all ages has found to be unconquerable. The physician must not only know medicine well, but must also possess wide general information, or his status as belonging to a learned profession, will not be established.

The radical changes in treatment introduced by Samuel Thomson, though generally beneficial, and based on sounder theory, failed to become acceptable in higher circles. The more aristocratic a class becomes, the more apprehensive its members are of compromising respectability, by any favoring of new lights, new ideas, or new men. Only those who are assured in their position, who can rely upon their social or scientific merit, are ready to countenance new projects. A mushroom aristocracy or fossil institution will not dare risk anything perilous to itself. Nor do the refined and sensitive, the highly-cultured and generous, easily get over the impediment of coarse manners, boorish habits and general illiteracy. The brag and bluster which are characteristics of the speech of many practitioners make them repulsive, and it may be, exert an unfortunate influence upon patients undergoing their treatment. Certain well-known physicians, of different schools, are chiefly remarkable for these peculiarities; and it cannot be denied that Thomson, and his followers made themselves unpopular

with many good people in this way. While we indicate this unfortunate practice, candor requires the acknowledgment that Thomsonian methods and medicines were precursors to our improved mode of treatment, and deserve the credit of beginning the revolution, for which Homeopathy has in a large degree carried away the credit.

After the great American conflict which ended in sweeping away all the infamous and obnoxious medical legislation of the first years of the nineteenth century, the tide of popular favor had set in in favor of the new remedies of the Reformed Practice. So popular was the designation of Eclectic, that physicians adverse to us, and intolerant of our methods, were often vehement in declaring themselves the true Eclectics—a disingenuous way of insinuating that others were not. They would sometimes use, and often misuse, the remedies employed by Eclectic physicians; even going to the length of claiming those with which they had succeeded, as discoveries of their own. Often, very often, have they resorted to the most pitiful devices and misrepresentations, in order to screen themselves from giving any credit to the men or the school, when they had committed plagiary.

However, the fact is patent, that from such means as these, a very large part of the remedies commonly known as Eclectic are now included in the Dispensatories as official, and we have even heard several that had been specifically denounced as quack medicines, afterward claimed as discoveries of “scientific physicians.” Indeed, podophyllin is prescribed as frequently, though not as skilfully, by other practitioners, as by Eclectics; Thomson's steam baths have become “Turkish,” “Russian;” and we may yet witness the resuscitation and apotheosis of composition powder and Number Six. There is a purpose to adopt the methods and remedies of the Reformers, but meanwhile to “sit down upon” and proscribe the discoverers. Where there is money to be grasped, or power to be exercised, justice and honor seem to stand a poor chance.

The Homeopathic Materia Medica, with its Aconite, Belladonna, Digitalis, Pulsatilla, etc., has also been adopted as regular; and we witness the tumblers of water medicated with a few drops of one or another specific in houses which the professed Homeopathist never enters. With a similar “liberality” the latter varies his infinitesimals with heroic doses of active drugs, which would inspire many an Old-School doctor with terror. Whatever walls the codes of ethics may seek to maintain, it is pretty certain that they are so honeycombed and undermined by rats and subterranean currents, as to make it

dangerous walking on the parapets.

Another element, has of late years, been added to the various matters of controversy. Under the attractive designation of NEW REMEDIES, there have been a great variety of drugs and specifics, chiefly of vegetable origin, both exotic and indigenous, introduced into the Materia Medica. It is an interesting fact, as betraying a disposition to get away from the Old Practice of the first half of the nineteenth century, and at the same time, escape the necessity to give credit to the Eclectic and Homeopathist. It might not be impossible at the same time to obliterate entirely the distinctions between the several schools of practice. When Tonga, Berberis, Eucalyptus, Manaca, Cascara sagrada, Coca, Grindelia robusta, etc., become our favorites to the exclusion of the more familiar agents of the Dispensatory, leaving calomel, antimony, lobelia, podophyllin, etc., among the things of the past, there will be little left, except ethics, to divide the practitioners who are now ranged in hostile camps.

It must be acknowledged, that very many of our population would like such a result. They care very little what name their doctors are called by, if good results follow the treatment. The laymen will never take part in enforcing statutes to regulate medical practice. They care for none of these things, and will leave the hit birds to do all the fluttering. Only rival physicians and rival medical colleges will henceforth do much in the way of devising and perpetuating medical partisanship. The most hungry will do the quarrelling.

The welcome which has been extended to New Remedies is equivalent to a confession that the drugs commonly in use are not generally satisfactory. Indeed, the ephemeral popularity of patent and proprietary medicines is largely due to that fact. The advertising which is so loudly denounced and sedulously provided against, is formidable entirely because it opens to the great army of the dissatisfied the knowledge of new medicines, and new physicians that may succeed where old ones generally fail. To be sure, these promises are often deceptive, and quacks batten on the popular credulity; but the fact is none the less notorious, that the methods and medicines commonly used are not regarded as adequate to meet the public want,

Many of the new-comers have been welcome additions to our stock of remedies, and are certain to hold for a long time, a conspicuous place in the Pharmacopoeia. At this, we are all bound to rejoice. Many disorders

heretofore intractable, are more likely now to yield, and come within the category of amenable to treatment. Any way to procure the dispersion of cancer, goitre, and the increasing army of tumors, the arrest of zymotic disease, and the permanent correction of morbid habits of body, would be an incalculable boon to the human race. There is much sense in the popular notion that every country and climate produces the remedies most suitable for the incident diseases. The prejudice against mineral and exotic medicines, though often not intelligent, is founded upon correct principle. We have not, however, attained the proper amount of knowledge to enable us to act upon the idea. It is still necessary, and will be for a very long period of time, to obtain our remedies for disease, as well as the commoner necessaries of life, from regions of the world far and wide. It would be rank folly to carry an idea, even if perfectly rational of itself, to an extent so disproportionate and inconsiderate, as to degrade it to a crotchet or a hobby.

Nevertheless, in the case of many of the so-called New Remedies, there is too abundant reason for distrust. The druggist and dispenser often hear complaints of the unsatisfactory results from the agents which they have supplied to physicians and other patrons. It is more than possible that our large manufacturing houses have placed articles on the market, relying upon insufficient evidence in regard to their properties and value. This liability is enough to induce careful practitioners to be careful about any substituting of medicines of which they know little or nothing, for others which they have employed with success and reasonable certainty. It is certainly not well to make many experiments with patients. New remedies should be handled cautiously, and, till their virtues are ascertained, very sparingly. So long as the medical art is little more than empiricism dignified by the name of Science, we should make haste but slowly, and not venture heedlessly beyond the rule of safe medication.

It will be proper, after this introduction, to notice a few of the New Remedies, which bid fair to attain a prominent place in our Pharmacopoeia. In some instances, they are acceptable as being more agreeable than older drugs; in others, as being more effective and beneficial to the patient. We are indebted for many of these, to the late Professor Bundy, of California. He was a zealous experimenter, and possessed an extensive technical knowledge of Botany, which is a necessary qualification. Dr. R. E. Kunze, of New York, likewise, has few equals as an investigator. He possesses a thorough knowledge of Materia Medica, and in his favorite studies, has few rivals or equals. His

papers on Cactus, Eucalyptus, Rhus venenata, Coca, and other new remedies, are excelled by no other writer. Dr. Pruitt, of Arkansas, and Dr. A. B. Woodward, of Pennsylvania, also deserve honorable mention. We must not, however, overlook our old Nestor in this war, Professor John King, who has done more than any one man to place Eclectic medicines in their proper place, and whose *Supplement* embracing the "New Remedies," is a most acceptable addition to our literature.

The *Alstonia scholaris*, or Dita bark, has not yet attained the distinction of official. It is a tropical product from a tree growing abundantly in India, Oceanica, Australia, and parts of Africa. Several alkaloids have been obtained from it; among them *dilain* and *ditamin*. It is regarded as a remedy for the debility succeeding fever and other exhausting diseases; and also for chronic diarrhoea and in the advanced stages of dysentery. It is classed as tonic, antiperiodic, and also as anthelmintic.

Berberis aquifolium has been recommended for diseases of the bowels and cutaneous affections. It appears to stimulate the glandular action; so that persons languid and drowsy become vivacious, and those troubled with a dry, scaly skin, acquire a soft and smooth surface instead. Dandruff, salt rheum, and even syphilis, are said to be treated by it with benefit. It is declared by many to be a sure remedy for scrofula. It is often administered in connection with *Grindelia robusta* and wins many of its laurels in that combination. Some physicians, however, have found their preparations inert.

Cactus or *Cereus grandiflorus*, the Queen of Night, is one of a very numerous family. It is represented as an arterial sedative, but not of the character of Aconite and Veratrum. It belongs rather to that class of cardiac disorders, that attend morbid affections of the sympathetic nerves. It will quiet the cardiac nerves and invigorate them, relieve palpitation, and is an excellent remedy for angina pectoris.

Cereus Bouplandii was introduced to the notice of the medical profession by Dr. Richard E. Kunze, of New York, in 1873. He describes it as acting on the sympathetic nervous system, and as of particular benefit in neuralgia of the heart. He denies that it is an arterial sedative, but considers it a "promoter of buoyancy," and declares that it has been successfully used in curing functional derangements as well as in alleviating the gravest lesions of the heart known. Acting on the trophic nerves, it has been used successfully for amaurosis, and to correct sluggish action of the uterus. It is beneficial also in hæmoptysis,

and occasionally in facial neuralgia. I would refer to Dr. Kunze's monograph as the most complete explanation. Druggists and physicians should be careful to procure the genuine article; as it is easy to substitute spurious preparations in its place. Dr. Kunze has not exaggerated its virtues.

Cascara sagrada or *Rhamnus Purshiana* was presented to the medical profession by the late Dr. J. H. Bundy. It is described as a peculiar tonic of the whole digestive apparatus, affecting in due proportion the muscular and nervous forces of the primæ viæ, correcting the hepatic and gastric secretions, as well as restoring normal and necessary mucus to the colon and rectum, thus lubricating and promoting the movements of the fwces. Its action in proper doses is essentially laxative, producing mushy or moulded stools, with the proper bilious hue. Unlike the ordinary cathartics, it is declared to change the entire bodily habit, doing away with constipation, instead of only relieving it. Many physicians combine it with Berberis, hyoscyamus, and other articles of similar properties.

Damiana, or *Turnera aphrodisiaca* is a medicine of uncertain, perhaps because unascertained, virtues. It was first described by Dr. F. O. St. Clair, of Washington, D. C. At first it was greatly commended as a restorative of sexual vigor; but this has been greatly disputed, perhaps because "all signs fail in dry weather." It is given in three forms—as a gummy extract, an alcoholic tincture, and an aqueous extract. Perhaps this may have to do with its virtues. Dr. Brannon, of Texas, employs the first form; having taken it himself in three-grain pills for an affection of the cerebellum and medulla oblongata. He describes it as not an aphrodisiac, strictly speaking, but a gentle stimulant of the cerebellum and medulla oblongata, extending its stimulant and tonic effects to the renal and genital organs. Twelve grains a day is his favorite quantity. An overdose seems to act like an overdose of quinia. Dr. A. B. Woodward appears to entertain a similar opinion of its virtues; but declares the alcoholic preparations inert. He employs the aqueous preparation, and considers it as a regulator of the sexual system through nervous stimulation. He has found it useful in prostatitis and hypertrophied testes, the sequelæ of manustupration (*sic*), amenorrhœa, hysteria, and even the condition producing nymphomania. To chew the leaves and hold the saliva in the mouth without swallowing, will be sufficient to denote the effects. Dr. Hammond, of Atlanta, Ga., carries the matter still further. While remarking that much of the drug in market was spurious or worthless, and therefore unsatisfactory, he pronounces it a great

remedy in renal and vesical diseases. In nephritic albuminaria the results were most marked from the beginning, and finally resulted in cure. It will diminish both the aqueous and saccharine secretion in diabetes. He suggests its combination with Hydrastis, Nux and Atropia, according to the symptoms. It is superior to Buchu, Uva ursi and other diuretics. In combination with Cimicifuga it is a superior remedy for painful diseases of the muscular coat of the bladder for rheumatic or neurotic affections involving the kidneys; with Rhus glabra, it is excellent for hemorrhagic diseases of the kidneys and bladder; and with Phytolacca for various disorders of the prostate and other glands.

Duboisia myoparoides is an Australian plant, akin to Atropia, Stramonium and Hyoscyamus. Its properties are very active; and it antagonizes with pilocarpine, muscarine and opium. It affects the organism like belladonna, accelerating the pulse, producing arterial tension, enlarging the pupils of the eyes, producing frontal headache. It is more active as well as permanent in its effects.

Erythroxylon Coca, or coca plant, has not achieved much fame in the United States. Dr. W. H. Bentley, of Kentucky, found it useful in wasting disease, tardy convalescence from acute maladies, and in certain forms of the opium habit. His plan is to give a drachm-dose of the fluid extract in water; just when the desire for opium or whisky is urgent. If this is not sufficient the dose may be repeated. It is a cure for drunkenness; but whether it will not set up a rival habit is a question. Dr. Kunze informs us that it is to the Peruvian what opium is to the Turk and tobacco to the Yankee. Thirty millions of pounds are consumed annually. It does not seem to shorten life, but rather to prolong it; yet it will lead to idiocy if used in excess. It will diminish sensitiveness to cold and enable breathing in rarefied air with greater ease. It was used in the mystic rites of the Incas like Homa, Soma and Kykeon, by the Aryans. It is said to increase the physical strength, the power to endure fatigue, to cure timidity and bashfulness. It restrains tissue-metamorphosis in febrile diseases, and is of great service in acute and chronic pneumonic consumption. In moderate doses it causes increased arterial activity, stimulates the secretions, and peristaltic actions of the alimentary canal, diminishes weariness, strengthens the pulse, calms nervous excitement, retards waste, facilitates repair, alleviates spasm, and increases mental activity. In short, it is an economist of vital energy, an effective aid to nutrition, a promotor of cheerfulness of mind, and an aphrodisiac. It is used in childbirth to promote uterine contractions. It will also produce catalepsy simulating death. Hysteria,

nervous dyspepsia and kindred disorders yield to it as if charmed.

Eucalyptus, the Australian fever tree, is warmly praised by some and dispraised by others. Its properties as an “antiseptic,” are very similar to those of pine and terebinth trees, We have many indigenous products of equal value. Dr. Mulheron, of Detroit, employs it for vesical irritation, and thinks it serviceable in gonorrhoeal mixtures.

Gentiana quinqueflora, gall of the earth, has been making its way into favor of later years, and deserves all the praise which it receives. Dr. A. B. Woodward recommends it as increasing the specific activity of other medicines. It is very useful in many cases where it does not cure. Intermittent and other fevers yield readily to it.

Grindelia robusta as a remedy for asthma, lung fever and kindred disorders, is much eulogized. As neither disorder is ever permanently relieved, it is well to learn of as many placebos and mitigants as possible, so that when one fails another can be had. A. E. Remington, of Bulls, New Zealand, certifies that in his hands it always succeeds. Dr. Morden, of Adrian, Michigan, asserts the very reverse; that it was mischievous in hay asthma Dr. Fuller, of Maine, praises the drug, mixing it however, with yerba santa, and giving doses of ten to fifteen drops every hour or so. Others combine it very satisfactorily with Berberis.

Manaca or *Mercurio-vegetal* is a Brazilian shrub, with drastic purgative properties. It is described at length in Dr. P. C. Strumpf's text-book on *Materia Medica*, published at Berlin, in 1855. It is there represented as emeto-cathartic, diaphoretic, diuretic, alternative and anti-syphilitic. It is prescribed as specific in snake-bites, because of its direct action on the blood and glands. It also expels other morbid matter through the skin and kidneys. It has been used with great success in this country as a remedy for rheumatism.

The *Mango* or *Mangifera Indica* was introduced to the medical profession in 1877, by Dr. M. F. Linnquist, of New Haven. It is an East Indian production, and it is cultivated in tropical countries for the sake of the fruit. The fruit and bark are employed for medicinal purposes. It is recommended for diseases of the mucous membranes; nasal catarrh, diarrhoea, dysentery, vaginitis, metritis, diphtheria, hemorrhage. Dr. Linnquist thus describes its uses: “I have used it for upward of eight years, and have largely experimented with it. It is an astringent of

peculiar power upon the mucous membrane. I first employed it in certain uterine diseases, with marked benefit. In catarrh, with the spray atomizer, I have used it with better success than any other agent. In diphtheria, and other malignant diseases of the throat, its effect has been truly marvellous. During last year I have had several cases of diphtheria, that I have treated exclusively with the fluid extract, penciling the fauces with it, of full strength, and also using it as a gargle in the proportion of two fluid-drachms of the fluid extract to four fluid-ounces of water. As an internal remedy in hemorrhages from the uterus, bowels, or lungs, or in muco-purulent discharges from either the bowels or uterus, I know of no agent equal to it. It appears to have the following advantages: The dose is small, is easily taken, has no disagreeable taste, does not derange the stomach, is rapid in its action, and more rapid in its effects than other medicines." In the forms of practice known as gynecological, it is the most serviceable.

Monarda, or wild bergamot, is a native of the Western States. It acts on the glandular structure, and is a sovereign remedy for the diseases styled malarial. Intermittent fever yields promptly to it, and never recurs. It ought to be a popular medicine, as excelling the more common agents; but it does its work too speedily for the prosperity of the physician.

Pilocarpus, or *jaborandi*, has achieved a considerable popularity in the Western States, but not so much at the East. It was known in England as an aromatic stimulant and sialogogue, but not greatly esteemed. Dr. J. M. da Silva Continho, a Brazilian gentleman, who accompanied the late Prof Agassiz, in his famous voyage of exploration up the Amazon, appears to have introduced it on the Western Continent. Dr. Kunze describes it as somewhat resembling Virginia snakeroot in its sudorific qualities and other virtues. Other Eclectic as well as Old-School physicians recommend it most highly. Its sudorific virtues are well established; and in pneumonia and acute bronchitis, Bright's disease, diabetes mellitus and acute rheumatism, it is very valuable.

The *Stigmata*, or "silk," of *Indian Corn*, was introduced by distinguished French physicians, for diseases of the kidneys and bladder. Prof. Castan extols the remedy for gravel and nephritic colic. M. Constantin Paul observed it to increase the urinary secretion in dropsy. Cystitis, dysuria, ammoniacal urine, are all relieved. While Castan regards it as a local anesthetic, others consider it to have a specific action on the mucous membrane. In case of uric or phosphatic gravel,

chronic cystitis whether with or without tendency to gravel and catarrh, the best results have been obtained.

Sarracenia, or pitcher plant, grows wild in the eastern regions of the Continent, as well as in the Southern States. Repeated endeavors have been made to make it popular among physicians. Singularly enough they have not been very successful. It appears to be invaluable in the treatment of exanthematous disease, as well as many of the complaints denominated malarial. Small-pox, it is asserted, has been aborted promptly by it, and reduced to an affection of trivial account. This is not improbable, but we need further and completer evidence. It contains a kind of vegetable pepsin which will digest flesh, and the bodies of insects, and as has been suggested, will dissolve cancerous tumors. The *Dionæa*, or Venus' fly-trap, it is affirmed, will do the same things.

Viburnum opulus or high cranberry has been employed in Eclectic Practice for many years, and with general approval. As a remedy for nervous disorders associated with morbid uterine conditions, it has few superiors. Dr. Phares, of Mississippi, writing in 1867, gives similar praise to the black haw, another plant of the same genus. He declares it nervine, astringent, anti-spasmodic, diuretic and tonic and recommends it in the nervous disorders of pregnancy, and as peculiarly efficacious in preventing miscarriage. In dysmenorrhœa it has few superiors. When there is pain at the beginning of the menstrual flow, or sensation of fullness and weight in the pelvis, it may be used with advantage. Dr. W. R. Hayden, of Massachusetts, has a preparation of it that is highly prized.

Yerba Santa, or *Eriodictyon*, is a Californian plant, highly extolled as a remedy for diseases of the larynx and mucous membrane. The favorite method is to combine it with *Grindelia robusta*. The two extracts thus mixed, have been found serviceable in asthma, lung fever and various affections of the air-passages. It is used in the Western States very generally.

It would be easy to extend this list, but it was my design to indicate only some of the more prominent and important. The profusion of these New Remedies will probably meet some important exigencies in medical experience; but it will be more likely to introduce curious controversies between practitioners. Drugs which some physicians regard as of powers almost magical, others of equal ability and experience will declare inert. The same remedies often act differently in the hands of different

prescribers. Lack of critical botanical knowledge, or reckless want of care, often leads to the mistaking of species, and the substituting of one article for another. In the general dissatisfaction which exists among our people in regard to medicines and medication, and the skepticism of many of our most intelligent physicians in regard to the permanent benefits of any remedial agent, the endeavor to find better means for overcoming the various disorders will be promoted. Cupidity, in its more attractive character of business enterprise, will seize upon this passion for new remedies, for its own ends. From the mass thus brought within our notice, the judicious and intuitive practitioner will in due time select and collect the real treasures. We can do no better than to avoid hasty conclusions, to be patient and observing, and perfectly willing to learn what may be made known.

I would, in this connection, call attention to the monograph of Dr. Kunze in the last volume of *The Transactions of the National Eclectic Medical Association*, on "Cardinal Points in Medical Botany." It contains suggestions which the druggist and skilful practitioner will do well to heed. The use of aromatic agents for sanitive and hygienic purposes can hardly be extolled too highly. As generators of ozone, they enhance the benefits of atmospheric air, destroy noxious and infectious emanations, and actually exert a healing influence. The free use of perfumes in fashionable circles is founded upon sound hygienic principle, and should be more zealously encouraged among the poor, in the sick chamber, and the public assembly-room, as well as in the boudoir. Prof Muspratt says on this subject: "Pathologically considered, the use of perfumes is in the most eminent degree prophylactic; the refreshing qualities of the citrine odors to an invalid, is well known. Health has often been restored when life and death trembled in the balance, by merely sprinkling the essence of cedrat in the sick-chamber."

The peptic fluid, which abounds in a certain class of plants, is the source of their virtue in resolving a great variety of disorders incident to the different regions of the alimentary canal. The *Drosera*, *Dionaea*, *Sarracenia*, *Lychnis*, *Rhododendron*, Fig, etc., possess rare qualities of this character.

Modes of preparation excite a great influence upon the quality of vegetable medicines. There has been great indifference or carelessness in this respect. Many have been led to prefer Old-School drugs, even the most objectionable, because they were more certain, when those of the American Practice, properly prepared, would have been of greater

service. If our physicians have sometimes become unpopular from this cause, it would be no cause of wonder. Medical Botany is too little understood by physicians; and the manufacturing houses are too liable to be conducted without proper regard to accurate knowledge in respect to the medicinal virtues of the various articles, or even the botanical classifications. Roots and herbs are not always of like properties when dried, as when in the green state. Some articles are potent in the natural condition, and become inert or otherwise changed by boiling or roasting. Alcohol, glycerine and water often extract different elements from the same raw material. Only an intelligent person is sufficiently aware of these matters, to enable a right method to be adopted.

Soil, climate and cultivation modify the properties of very many vegetables. Our fruits and food-plants are supposed to have been developed by judicious rearing and culture. The history of the potato is well known. The peach came from the bitter almond; the apple from the miserable crab-fruit. The cereals have an analogous history. Medicinal plants have undergone even more remarkable changes. The Conium is not poisonous in Upper Asia. The Indian Hemp is more prolific of hashish in Kashmir. Celery is unwholesome when growing wild; so also are parsnip, carrot and asparagus. Dandelion has few medicinal virtues when cultivated; and skullcap from the Southern States is far more potent than that which grows in the North. The calisaya bark of India will not yield quinia in any considerable amount.

The virtues of plants differ often at the various periods of growth. Tannic acid exists in larger quantities in young than in old plants; decreasing in Winter and increasing in Spring. It is not found in poisonous plants, or those having a milky or viscid sap. Hydrocyanic acid is found most abundant in the blossoms and green leaves, unripe fruit, and the kernel of the ripe fruit of the various plants of the plum and almond family. Asclepir, Popasy, Lettuce, Phytolacca, and other plants, exhibit little medicinal energy in their sap and leaves when young. Starch is developed by cultivation.

The rule applies also, that "What is one's food is another's poison." Many persons will not tolerate quinia, but are liable to be made insane by it. Aconite and Belladonna produce remarkable phenomena in some individuals. We observe like repugnances in regard to food. Many plants which are medicinal and poisonous to mankind, are wholesome food for certain races of birds and animals. It is not necessary to push this matter further. Enough has been stated, to indicate the danger from too

superficial knowledge. A responsibility by no means light, devolves upon the vendor and manufacturer of medicines; and in none, perhaps, more onerously, than on those dealing in New Remedies.

RHUS AROMATICA.

By J. T. MCCLANAHAN, M. D., BOONVILLE, MO.

Rhus aromatica has been known to, and used by the members of my family for a period of over thirty years; but it was not until about two years since that the writer first made known to the profession the virtues of the remedy in the treatment of diseases of the mucous surfaces, more especially of the genito-urinary organs and bowels, viz: Diabetes, enuresis, haematuria, gonorrhoea, leucorrhoea, diarrhoea, etc. I have also since learned that it is very useful in uterine hemorrhage, hemorrhage of the lungs and stomach, and in some forms of catarrh and bronchial troubles accompanied by a free discharge. I will give as the best indications to the proper selection of this remedy that I know: Profuse free discharges, sallowness, loss of flesh, abdomen flabby, tongue pale, trembling, pulse feeble, trembling in lower limbs, with a general feeling of lassitude and languor. Of course, in the selection of this remedy for the arrest of hemorrhage we are to be governed as in the selection of any other remedy possessing styptic properties. It is certainly the most positive and reliable remedy known for hemorrhage of the kidneys and bladder, and I now give it preference, as a rule, in my obstetrical practice. As before intimated, I have been acquainted with the *Rhus aromatica* indirectly for a period of over thirty years, and directly for a period of ten years during my connection with the study and practice of medicine. It was used extensively by my grandfather, Dr. John Gray, who was distinguished in these parts at an early day for the successful treatment of obstinate chronic diseases. He used it, both combined and uncombined, principally in the treatment of diabetes. So far as I am aware the use of the remedy originated with him; and for many years after was used by my father, Dr. F. McClanahan, for about the same purpose. I believe that he first suggested its use in the treatment of other diseases of the genito-urinary organs. His experience led to my subsequent and further investigations, and the introduction of the *Rhus aromatica* to the medical profession. Prior to this, so little was known of it that nothing had ever been written upon the subject, so far as I was aware, except a very meagre description given by Wood in his *Class-Book of Botany*, p. 203. For a full and clear description and history

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of this drug, I will quote from the *Supplement to the American Dispensatory*, recently published by Professors King and Lloyd of Cincinnati:

“This is a small shrub, growing from two to six feet high, and found in clumps throughout sections of the eastern United States, in rocky situations.

DESCRIPTION.

The leaves are trifoliate, and on stalks about an inch in length. The three leaflets are sessile, and covered with a short velvety pubescence when young. The terminal leaflet is considerably larger than the lateral leaflets, from an inch to two inches in length, and about two-thirds as wide. They are entire and tapering at the base, acute, and have eight or ten crenate teeth at the apex. The flowers are small, greenish-yellow, and open in April before the leaves; they are in stalked, spiked, ament-like clusters, and before flowering have the appearance of an unexpanded catkin. The sepals, petals and stamens are in fives, and the pistil is a one-ovuled ovary, with three short styles. The fruit is a small red drupe, about the size of a pea, covered with a dense white pubescence. They are produced in clusters of about a dozen, and are on stalks of about an inch long; each one contains a single flattened seed. A variety with small, smooth leaflets, less than an inch in length, is common throughout the Western States.

HISTORY.

The part employed is the root, or bark of the root. It had gained some little local reputation heretofore, but was unknown to the medical profession generally until introduced by Dr. McClanahan in 1879, When dry, the root is from one-fourth of an inch to an inch in diameter, and appears in the market in pieces of from six inches to two feet in length. The bark is of a dry, rusty-brown color externally, and a pink or walnut color below the cork. It is about one-eighth of an inch in thickness, and there are little cavities in it containing a transparent balsam, somewhat resembling balsam of fir. The wood is white, or yellowish. When fresh, the wounded bark exudes a turpentine-like balsam, or solution of a resin in some volatile oil, which dries to a glossy tear or layer. The bark is astringent; but, undoubtedly, the terebinthinous balsam likewise possesses considerable medicinal value. Alcohol extracts this substance, and the addition of water to the tincture

produces a white or milky appearance. In making the tincture of either the fresh or dry bark, alcohol alone should be used. Any addition of water is objectionable.”

My experience with reference to the preparation of the tincture is somewhat at variance with the last remark of Prof. King.

It has been my practice to prepare a saturated tincture of the fresh bark of the root, representing about eight ounces of the crude article to one pound of the tincture, by using 75 per cent. alcohol as a solvent, and allowing it to stand a sufficient length of time. This makes a fine amber-colored tincture, which makes a beautiful, clear prescription when added to either water, syrup or glycerine. Hence, I have not experienced the milkiness referred to in the preparation and use of my own tinctures. However, I doubt not that it is necessary to use absolute alcohol in the preparation of fluid extracts, because of the balsamic principle, and I do not deny that a preparation of any strength might be better if it were made of absolute alcohol.

Again, with reference to the properties and uses of the *Rhus aromatica*, Prof. King says: “This exceedingly valuable addition to our Materia Medica was first introduced by J. T. McClanahan, M. D., of Boonville, Mo. At first, the use of this remedy was confined to diabetes and other excessive discharges from the kidneys and bladder, as well as to cases of incipient albuminuria. More recently, it has been employed by numerous practitioners, who, in addition to the abovenamed maladies, have found it advantageous in urethral irritations, hemorrhage from the stomach, lungs, kidneys, bladder or uterus, uterine leucorrhoea, cholera infantum, diarrhoea, dysentery, chronic laryngitis, chronic bronchitis, and especially useful in the enuresis of children and aged persons. We are aware of the value of this agent in several of the diseases referred to, and should subsequent experiments prove its efficacy in the earlier stages of albuminuria, it will rank among the first therapeutical remedies of our Materia Medica. It is now preferred in the form of fluid extract, of which the dose varies from five to sixty minims, repeated every three or four hours. It may be taken in water and glycerine, and in solution of pure gelatin or syrup, when these vehicles are not contra-indicated.” The Doctor continues: “Since writing the above, we have received a letter from A. G. Springsteen, M. D., of Cleveland, Ohio, in which he refers to a patient suffering for several years from catarrh of the bladder and hypertrophy of the prostate, with excruciating pain during micturition, necessitating the use of the soft

catheter; and after exhausting all known means his patient was cured with *Rhus aromatica*." I will here condense one of my first articles, published in the *Eclectic Medical Journal* during the early part of 1879:

"RHUS AROMATICA has been tested and its therapeutical powers proved, for more than a quarter of a century. For several years after its discovery it was used exclusively in the treatment of all excessive discharges from the kidneys and bladder, especially diabetes. Until within the past ten years, it was employed in the form of a decoction and powder, but latterly it has been used in the form of a saturated tincture. The dose of the latter has varied from one drop to half a teaspoonful; and for the last two years I have rarely used a larger dose than ten drops. And now, to illustrate the action of the *Rhus aromatica*, I will select a few cases that have come under my personal observation:

"*Diabetes*,—Some months ago I was called several miles from my office to see a lady who was said by her physician and friends to be in a critical condition; mother of four children, aged thirty-four, tall, spare made, dark hair, skin and eyes. I found her confined to her bed, though she was able to go about the house at times. The following was her condition: Skin sallow, eyes sunken, pulse feeble and quick, temperature one hundred and one-half degrees, loss of flesh, slight cough, and sometimes night-sweats, appetite variable, sometimes ravenous and sometimes not so good; thirst, more or less, all the time; bowels constipated and sometimes in the contrary condition; also a general sense of lassitude and languor. The history of the case revealed the fact that several months previously her attention was first attracted by frequent calls to urinate, and that she was compelled to get up at night to void large quantities of urine. This condition of things had been steadily increasing, until she was compelled to abandon her ordinary household duties. Under the usual tests the urine revealed a large saccharine deposit; specific gravity, 1031. I left an ounce-vial of a saturated tincture of *Rhus aromatica*, and ordered her to take ten drops every four hours, and report in a week. At the expiration of that time her husband reported that the amount of urine voided was greatly diminished, and that she appeared greatly improved in every respect, except she was troubled with considerable pain and soreness over region of kidneys. I gave him a box of irritating plaster, which I ordered to be worn over kidneys until the desired result was obtained. No other medicine was necessary; the dose of *Rhus aromatica* being varied from time to time as necessity required. This, together with proper bathing, clothing, exercise, and above all, proper diet, carefully avoiding

anything that favored the sugar-forming processes in the body, completed the treatment. At the expiration of four months the patient was enjoying reasonable health and has remained so to the present.

Enuresis, arising either from atony of the muscular, or irritation of nervous fibres, will be promptly met by the *Rhus aromatica*. I have relieved many cases in which the patient was unable to restrain the urine to normal distention of the bladder, and others who were unable to prevent constant dribbling. If there is a specific for that troublesome condition which we so often meet in children, that of "bed-wetting," we certainly have it in *Rhus aromatica*. Let one or two illustrations suffice. The mother of John D., aged five years, called January 3d, stating that two years previous her little boy suffered from a severe attack of scarlet fever, and ever since he had been more or less unable to control his urine, and for the past few months he had little or no control over it at all; further, that he would wet the bed two or three times during the night, and himself during the day. She further stated that she had tried several doctors, and almost every remedy that had been suggested to her for the disagreeable malady, without permanent benefit. The case had now become almost alarming and she wanted 'something done.' I gave an ounce-vial of the first dilution of *Rhus aromatica* and ordered ten drops given three times a day; requiring him empty his bladder before retiring, and to get up immediately on feeling an inclination to urinate. His improvement was rapid; at the expiration of six weeks the doses, morning and noon, were discontinued, and only that at night continued. At the end of three months the patient was cured.

"I was called to see Mr. T., aged fifty-one, November 13, 1878. For more than a year he had been unable to prevent an almost constant dribbling of urine, which rendered his existence miserable. There was also a general debilitated condition of his whole system; appetite and bowels irregular; palpitation; skin sallow; pain in back and loins; pulse soft and feeble; tongue purple, or bluish red. R. Ferri perchl, drs. 2.; nuc. vom. gtts., 15.; simp. syr., oz. 6.; Mix—Sig., ten drops after each meal. For the urinary trouble: R. *Rhus aromatica*, oz. 1.; ten drops at 8, 11, 3 and 7 o'clock each day. Improvement was marked from the beginning. After eight weeks he was able to hold his urine to normal distention of the bladder, and ultimately a cure was accomplished.

"The superiority of this remedy in the treatment of diabetes and enuresis led to its use in other abnormal conditions of the urinary and genital organs, namely: Hematuria, uterine hemorrhage, menorrhagia,

leucorrhœa and other excessive discharges, accompanied by a relaxed condition of uterus. I have found it to act well in hæmaturia arising from various causes. It will be found an excellent remedy in hæmorrhage of the kidneys arising from a general diseased condition of the blood, accompanied by general debility—that form which sometimes precedes Bright's disease; and it will, many times, relieve the same arising from falls, blows, calculus, etc. A friend of mine, Dr. Gray, has relieved two cases of chronic hæmaturia with the *Rhus*, which he could not manage with any other remedy. I am delighted with its action in uterine hæmorrhage. I regard it as inferior to no remedy; I use it in the same capacity as cinnamon, erigeron, ergot, etc., the dose varying from five to twenty drops of the tincture, according to the urgency of the case. I have many times relied upon it alone in urgent cases; hence I do not hesitate to pronounce the *Rhus aromatica* a remedy among the first in obstetric practice. My father, Dr. F. McClanahan, uses it largely in all active and passive hæmorrhages, whether from lungs, kidneys, bowels or uterus, and his experience is, that there is no remedy of greater efficacy in the treatment of hæmorrhage of the kidneys and uterus, especially *post-partum* hæmorrhage. Furthermore, after twenty-five years' experience with it, he is very emphatic in saying that its curative power for each of the above described conditions cannot be too highly estimated.

“For the last three years I have used it largely in summer diseases of children. Time and space will not permit of further examples, and I will only point out the conditions to which it is applicable: Stools profuse, skin cool and sallow, pulse small and feeble, loss of flesh, abdomen flabby, tongue pale, trembling and moist, trembling in lower limbs, general sense of lassitude and languor. For infants, put ten to twenty drops in a half-glass of water, and give a teaspoonful as often as necessary; dose for children, perhaps five drops of the first dilution.

“I neglected to state that my grandfather, Dr. John Gray, (now dead), used this remedy alike in diabetes and albuminuria and with equal success. My father's experience has been about the same. My experience has been limited by a lack of opportunity; however, I have tested it in one case of incipient albuminuria with success. I see no reason why it should not be applicable to albuminuria.”

The first statement after this article appeared in the *Eclectic Medical Journal*, was written by Dr. J. P. King, and, I think, possesses important features which renders it worthy of notice:

“John W., aged thirty-seven, a compositor, consulted me in November, 1878. He furnished me with a subjoined account of his case in writing: ‘For two months previous to my discovering that I passed more urine than I ought to do—about July—I experienced very bad health. After eating my meals I felt an oppressiveness at the chest, an uncomfortable sensation, as if I were blown out with wind. I took no notice of these sensations, because, after a little rest, they went away. A little while afterward I felt very thirsty, and drank as much as I could get. Finding that I made more urine than usual, I fancied that it was on account of the unusual quantity of drink that I took. I had beatings of the heart ; at times absence of mind, not knowing what I did, but soon recovering myself; very nervous, not getting proper sleep at night; I awoke every hour to pass water; there were pains in the shin-bones when in bed; pains across the loins in the day; urine was voided every two hours. I lost flesh; had very little appetite, but always thirsty; gums were very sore after eating, sometimes bled; there were pains up the spine of the back.’

“To this account a few additional particulars may be appended. The patient is a short, but stout, well-formed man, of rather sanguine temperament. When he first presented himself to me, the chief features about him denoting illness were his sunken eyes and somewhat wasted appearance. On inquiry into his habits and mode of life, with a view to discover the cause of the malady, I found that as a compositor a very unhealthy occupation—he worked, for about eight months previous to becoming ill, about one hundred hours per week; working on Sundays and much at night. The nightwork being trying, he had recourse about twice a week to stimulants, as gin, etc. The room in which he worked was lighted with gas, and was occupied by about thirty other compositors. No hereditary tendency to diabetes could be traced.

“I prescribed for him on the 18th of November as follows: A teaspoonful of the fluid extract of the bark of the root of *Rhus aromatica*—Parke, Davis & Co.'s preparation—three times a day. Strict rules were enjoined respecting his diet and mode of living. He was directed to take fresh air twice or thrice daily, and occasionally fish, poultry, eggs and milk; in place of bread, to eat only the specially prepared bran-biscuits, and to partake freely of all the green vegetables; to avoid all farinaceous articles, as ordinary bread, pastry, puddings; and everything flour, starch, or arrowroot of any kind; to abstain generally from fruit, especially the sweeter kinds, as all the dried fruits; and amongst the

vegetables, not to eat potatoes, artichokes, parsnips or carrots. These regulations were rigidly adhered to throughout the treatment of the case. From the combined effect of regimen and medicine, the patient speedily improved. During the three months and a half of treatment I registered daily the density and quantity of urine voided, but want of space forbids me inserting it here. I will only state that the density was 1042 and the quantity five pints at the beginning of the treatment, and 1021 and two pints five oz. at the termination. The specific gravity was found to be over 1040 on the first day. About the end of February he discontinued the medicine. I have seen him since that time every few days. His urine has kept since, and is now entirely free from sugar.

“I have treated, during many years of practice, many cases of diabetes, but have never succeeded so well with any other remedy as with *Rhus aromatica*, and I confidently recommend it to the profession.”

Under date of August 29, 1879, R. Ande Blair, M. D., of Waterford, Pa., writes to the editor of *New Preparations* as follows: “In a case of fifteen years' standing of incontinence of urine, with dribbling of urine for fifteen or twenty minutes after urinating, I had used all the remedies generally recommended for such difficulties with but little good effect. My patient and myself became nearly hopeless as to a permanent good result. I finally sent for some of the *Rhus aromatica* as a last resort. I was obliged to send four times for the medicine ere I succeeded in obtaining it. I gave it in ten-drop doses, increasing the dose until the patient took seventeen drops four times a day. The medicine acted very kindly with him, and now, as some time has elapsed since he has noticed any symptoms, I am inclined to view it as a cure.”

James Cooper, M. D., of Bellefontaine, Ohio, writes to the same journal as follows: “I have tested the fluid extract of *Rhus aromatica* in the following cases: J.S., æt. 25, had been troubled with diabetes insipidus about six months. He had tried several physicians and various remedies without relief. He finally applied to me and I put him on the following: R. *Rhus aromatica*, fluid ext. oz. 1; glycerine, oz. 1/2; water ad., oz. 4. M. Sig. One teaspoonful four times a day. Reported improvement after the second day and now believes himself cured. It is two weeks since he took the last of the prescription and he reports himself well and gaining in flesh. C. A., æt. 61, has been troubled with frequent discharges of urine during the day and from three to four discharges during the night; quantity large for several years, though at times worse than others. He had used a number of prescriptions with only temporary benefit. I gave

him the above prescription in the morning, and he reported that he had to get up but once during the first night and not at all afterward. He took two prescriptions and reports himself well. J. K., æt. 18. This young man has been wetting the bed nightly, so his mother says, since childhood. He had taken much medicine from many physicians, without benefit. I prescribed as above, and after the second night he was all right. The medicine was ordered to be given three times a day, last dose at bedtime, until improvement took place; then only at bedtime. The prescription was given him August 11. I heard from him a few days ago, and he remains well, having used but the single four-ounce bottle of the medicine. M. K., æt. 8, sister of the above, had incontinence of urine five years or more, and gave her mother a great deal of trouble. I gave the same prescription in one-fourth teaspoonful doses. Two ounces cured her, so her mother reports. In the last two cases I ordered generous diet, with little fluid drink after dinner, and advised that the patients void urine, if possible, just before retiring.”

ENURESIS.

A. O'Neal, M. D., Meadville, Pa., in the *American Medical Journal* says: “This affection is peculiar to children, and is frequent in old age. Leaving out the causes, such as stone in the bladder, irritability of that organ and gastro-intestinal irritation, which are exceedingly frequent as causes. Another still exists in children occasionally where a strumous habit appears as the prime factor, when nerve-force is impaired through defective nutritive function. This class is apparently the most difficult to treat with success. Having had a child six years old under treatment, lately, where traces of mal-assimilation appeared to be the predisposing cause, I resorted to the usual remedies, such as iron, cantharides, etc., ad nauseam, which were without such relief as usually follows. Medicine was discontinued for a week, and the fluid extract of *Rhus aromatica* then given in fifteen-drop doses, thrice daily; the last dose immediately before sending the child to bed. This was kept up for two weeks, gradually increasing the dose to twenty-five drops *ter die*, when the child ceased “wetting the bed.” This is the first thorough test in my own hands, hence I speak conjointly with the experience of others.”

Prof. Pitzer, editor of the same journal says: “We have found the *Rhus aromatica* excellent in passive hemorrhage, menorrhagia attended by anemia, and incontinence of urine in children of weak constitutions is speedily relieved—sometimes immediately arrested by it. We are using the remedy in other cases and shall be able to report more fully in the

future.”

In “The Mirror” of the *Medical Tribune*, Professor Wilder writes: “Where mal-assimilation, as in the case of children, is the provoking cause of enuresis, the fluid extract of *Rhus aromatica* in fifteen-drop doses, given thrice daily, the last at bedtime, and increased gradually to twenty-five drops, will often correct the matter.”

In a letter received from Dr. A. B. Hostetler, Joplin, Mo., sometime since, he writes: “You seem to give the *Rhus aromatica* astringent, tonic and stimulant properties, and useful in enuresis, diabetes, uterine hemorrhage, atonic diarrhoea, etc. Why not good for leucorrhœa, gonorrhœa, ptyalism, and in fact all profuse discharges from any part of the mucous membranes? And if it possesses such properties, why is it not an excellent remedy in some forms of ulceration? The aborigines use it as a discutient in hydrarthrus, both externally and internally; also as an ointment in old sores. It is also claimed to have been used successfully in epilepsy.”

I have been informed by the old settlers that this remedy was used largely at an early date in an ointment for rheumatism, and later as an invaluable remedy for coughs and urinary diseases in horses.

Dr. J. G. Tressler, of Bluff Creek, Ind., also writes: “I have tried the *Rhus aromatica* in two cases of enuresis with good results. We are now testing it in a case of diabetes with promise of good results.”

Drs. Boots and Marsh, editors of the *Independent Medical Investigator*, write: “We can say that the *Rhus aromatica* has proved to do all that is claimed for it, so far as we have used it.” Later, Dr. Boots writes: “I have used the *Rhus aromatica* in quite a number of cases in which there was an increased amount of urine passed, and it has so far, in every case, proven a success. The conditions have not been noted, and I would be unable to point out the exact lesions for which the remedy is useful. I have used it in a few cases of difficult micturition, in which the results have been good.”

E. C. Thomas, M. D., Cleveland, Ohio, also writes as follows: “On the appearance of your first article on *Rhus aromatica*, I was very much interested, as I had on hand three similar cases to those described by you. I immediately procured a pound of the fluid extract of the famous shrub, and was not disappointed in its wonderfully curative effects. I

have since used four pounds and should like to give you the results, particularly in four cases, and perhaps will when I get through treatment.”

Again, Dr. O. S. Prophitt, of Hot Springs, Ark., writes:

“I have been using *Rhus aromatica* for thirty-five years. I find it safe and reliable in all disorders of the kidneys and bladder, answering all classes alike. I have also found it good in some forms of dysentery. I use it both alone and combined.”

Dr. A. L. Foreman, of Milton, Ill., says: “No other remedy has given me such universal satisfaction for diseases for which it is indicated, as has the *Rhus aromatica* in the treatment of hematuria and incontinence of urine. Out of some twenty cases treated I have only to report two partial failures, and I think in these two the medicine was not continued a sufficient length of time. I consider the *Rhus aromatica* a true specific.”

P. D. Yost, M. D., of the American Medical College, St. Louis, also writes: “My experience with the *Rhus aromatica* has been limited, but when used it has given satisfaction. I regard it as one of the best of recent additions to the *Materia Medica* and shall continue to prescribe in such diseases as you have been pleased to recommend it in.”

A. M. Eidson, M. D., of Topeka, Kas., says: “I have found the *Rhus aromatica* very efficient in all mucous diseases, diarrhea, dysentery, summer complaints, and diseases of the urinary organs. It was especially potent in diabetes, where I have been much gratified by its services.”

Again, Dr. A. Churchill, Nevada, Mo., writes: “Although I have not seen such favorable results from the *Rhus aromatica* as I had anticipated; however, I am satisfied it is superior to any other agent that I have used for the derangements of the urinary organs for which it is recommended.”

Prof. I. J. M. Goss, Marietta, Ga., says of the *Rhus aromatica*: “This new candidate for professional favor is proving valuable in many respects. It not only acts specifically upon the urinary apparatus, but has considerable affinity for the mucous membrane of the bronchial tubes, relieving irritation and lessening excessive expectoration and soothing the cough in a marked manner. I like it very much in hemorrhage of the

kidneys, and bladder. In enuresis of old and young, this is one of our most trustworthy remedies, in doses of twenty to thirty drops of the fluid extract.”

My own experience with the remedy this fall and winter, in the treatment of coughs with free expectoration, has been very gratifying. It quiets the cough, relieves the irritation, and lessens the expectoration admirably, especially in bronchial affections.

Upon this point, Dr. H. W. Halliday, of Franklin, Texas, writes to *The Therapeutic Gazette*: “I have just been noticing an account of *Rhus aromatica* and its uses, and am surprised to find it not recommended in respiratory affections. It has performed wonderful cures in lung troubles, some supposed to be consumption of years’ standing. It grows abundantly here, and I prescribe it in whooping cough and colds with good effect.”

In a letter dated October 4, 1879, Prof. Edwin M. Hale, of Chicago, Ill., writes as follows: “I have used the *Rhus aromatica* in a few cases with good results. Your paper on its uses will appear in full in the fifth edition of my *Materia Medica and Therapeutics*,” Again the same gentleman writes. “I have used the *Rhus aromatica* principally in catarrhal affections of the nasal passages and vagina, and find it almost a specific when used locally. Internally I have not used it much. It seems, however, to act well in chronic diarrhea and dysentery.”

J. C. Spiegel, M. D., Mount Morris, N. Y., in *The Therapeutic Gazette*, relates: “I have just treated a case of chronic gonorrhoeal discharge in the male, which I report, because of the novelty and success of the treatment. The patient had passed under the care of a number physicians, and had been submitted to the usual routine measures, in spite of all which the discharge persisted. There being no evidence of stricture, I prepared the following with a sample of the *Rhus aromatica* which had been left me.

R.—*Rhus aromaticæ* ext. fluidi, oz. ss.
Aquæ puræ, oz. j.
Glycerinæ, oz. ss.

For injection, three times a day after urinating. The improvement was immediate, and continued until complete recovery.”

J. Ingraham Brown, M. D., of Athens, Maine, reports: “I have tested

Rhus aromatica in two cases of diabetes. I find it exerting a very favorable influence and there is material change in the disease taking place. I combine a small quantity of Eucalyptus with it, also other things, according to my judgment, in each particular case.”

The following interesting case is reported in the *American Medical Journal* by A. G. Springsteen, M. D., of Cleveland, Ohio. This is, no doubt, the same case referred to by Prof. King, of Cincinnati, in his *Supplement to the American Dispensatory*:

“I wish to lay before the intelligent readers of your journal an important experience I have had with the use and therapeutic qualities of this new and indispensably valuable remedy. For some months past I have had under treatment a friend of mine, Capt. W., aged sixty-five, who for years has been afflicted with a urinary trouble of a very painful and unpleasant character, namely: Inflammatory catarrh of the bladder and urethra, and consequent hypertrophy of the prostate gland. For months he found it impossible to urinate without the use of the soft catheter, always attended by the most excruciating and cutting pain, producing an immediate desire to repeat the operation, and always without relief. He gradually became anemic, constipated and generally debilitated; suffered from languor and loss of appetite and strength. He was obliged to rest himself from the active duties of his business. I faithfully tried all known remedies, and some unknown; counseled with eminent and learned men—some of whom have made the study of urinary troubles a speciality for years—but their counsel was unavailing. I saw an advertisement in a southern medical journal for a certain medicine ‘to cure catarrh of the bladder.’ I sent for it, and after some delay I was informed by the dear doctor advertising, that he would not send the medicine without first having the money in his fist. So my patient failed to take this professor's medicine, and failed to become indebted for the same, notwithstanding he (my patient) was financially fixed to the tune of a quarter of a million. The astute doctor lost the sale of his nostrum, and the consequent reputation of a cure thereby. Last spring I advised my patient to visit the Hot Springs of Arkansas, where, in company with our common friend, Hon. E. B. Washburne, of Illinois, he remained about six weeks, with little or no benefit. Discouraged and disheartened, he reluctantly turned his face homeward and again appealed to me to fix up something to relieve him, that he might die in comparative comfort. I had read of the therapeutic effects of *Rhus aromatica*, and determined to test its reputation fairly on this occasion. I gave the fluid extract in teaspoonful doses in a little water or wine three to four times

a day, and it went right home to do its duty. In four weeks' time the prostate became so much reduced, that the further use of the catheter was unnecessary; and I stood surprised at the discovery, and felt to exclaim 'eureka!' The inflammatory symptoms gradually disappeared, and of course the pain of micturition subsided; the appetite became established; strength and vigor of the system reasserted themselves, and the Captain resumed his business. What other remedy could make a record like this in the same length of time? I am now using the *Rhus* in several other similar cases, with satisfactory results. I consider it the remedy *par excellence*, an invaluable specific, and the only known remedy that will reduce enlargement of the prostate gland, and cure catarrh of the bladder."

The above is certainly a most wonderful cure, and were it not that I am so well acquainted with Dr. Springsteen, I might be inclined to doubt his statements somewhat. As it is, I do not doubt one word. However, I have seen some as seemingly hopeless cases cured, but of a different character. I will give as one illustration a case that was under my father's care when I was a student in his office. A young man came under his treatment, presenting a cadaverous appearance, emaciated and haggard, with all the usual symptoms and conditions attendant upon diabetes. There was no particular change in the urine, except that the quantity voided, both day and night, was very large and of low specific gravity. He was one of the most woe-begone looking men I had ever seen, and to my mind possessed little or no chance for recovery. But to my utter astonishment, he improved rapidly under the influence of teaspoonful doses of the powdered bark of the root of *Rhus aromatica*, given in a wineglass of milk three times a day, together with proper diet, regular habits, etc. He made a good recovery in a few months, and I suppose enjoys good health at present. The following was copied in the *Journal of Materia Medica*, March, 1880, from the *American Medical Journal*, by J. A. Munk, M.D., now of Topeka, Kansas:

"Among the new remedies that have been recently introduced, the *Rhus aromatica* is, perhaps, not the least. This drug was brought to the notice of the profession by Dr. J. T. McClanahan, of Boonville, Mo., who claims to have used it extensively and with excellent success. It is said to be particularly useful in urinary disorders, exerting a restraining influence upon the kidneys and bladder. In diabetes, enuresis, etc., it is reported as giving very satisfactory results.

"From the few experiments I have made with the drug, I am inclined to

think that it not only exerts a restraining influence upon the urinary organs, but also upon all the secretions. It likewise influences the circulation as a hemostatic.

“I will briefly note a few cases which I have treated with this remedy within the past few months:

“Case 1.—Mr. P., aged twenty-six years, of a sanguine temperament, presented a well marked case of purpura hemorrhagica. The eruption was of a bright scarlet color, appearing on various parts of the body, but principally on the neck, breast and arms. It was most marked in the morning, when it appeared on the skin in blotches or streaks as if scratched by the finger nails. Much of it could be removed by rubbing with a cloth, staining it red. I gave him a treatment consisting of iron, ergot, belladonna, etc., without any apparent benefit. Having some of the Rhus on hand for trial, and thinking that its restraining influence might be good in this case, I decided to give it at a venture. I gave him a four-ounce preparation of tincture of Rhus and glycerine, equal parts, and ordered a teaspoonful to be taken every four hours. After the second day, there was a decided improvement, and before the one bottle was all taken the eruption had entirely disappeared.

“Case 2.—Mrs. M. was very much emaciated and debilitated from a protracted illness caused by a complication of diseases, and was troubled with profuse sweating. After using aromatic sulphuric acid and a cold infusion of sage as a drink, without any apparent benefit, I gave her the Rhus mixture as above. This gradually lessened the perspiration, which after several days became normal.

“Case 3.—A little son of C. R. was troubled with the common complaint of childhood, wetting the bed. He had been troubled for several months, and all the time growing worse. I prescribed Rhus, one ounce of the tincture to two ounces of glycerine and one ounce of water. He was well before he had all the medicine taken.

“Case 4.—Another case of enuresis similar to the last, only of longer standing. I gave the Rhus mixture as in the previous case, which materially benefited the patient, but the father neglecting to renew the medicine, the case was not cured. He is, however, under treatment again with the prospect of being cured.

“The Rhus has this additional recommendation to its utility, that it is not

unpleasant to the taste, thus making it particularly suitable for children who are averse to taking nasty medicine.”

In the May number of the *Medical Summary* will be found an article taken from the *Therapeutic Gazette*, by Prof. J. W. Compton, M. D., of the Medical College at Evansville, who says:

“During the limited time that I have been permitted to prescribe and note the therapeutic action of *Rhus aromatica*, I have been enabled to testify to its unmistakable and complete success in the cure of two cases out of three of incontinence or inability to retain the urine during the hours of sleep at night, or for any considerable time in the day.

“Case 1.—Was a boy of 10 years who had wet his bed almost every night of his life. He was at the time I first prescribed for him, six months ago, a bright school boy, and his infirmity was exceedingly embarrassing to him. He commenced with ten drops three times a day. When he had taken one ounce of the fluid extract there was a decided improvement, he being able to pass two or three nights in the week with out wetting his bed. The second ounce was prescribed in fifteen-drop doses three time per day, and resulted in a complete cure of his infirmity, which has not returned at this writing.

“Case 2.—This was in every respect similar to the first, both in regard to the character and to the success of the case.

“Case 3.—A little girl four years of age, wet her bed every night, and was often a source of much embarrassment to her parents, as she could not retain her urine a sufficient length of time to remain in church during the usual hours of service. The success of the two former cases gave me so much confidence in the almost specific action of the remedy, that I prescribed it in ten-drop doses three times per day, with instructions to the mother to gradually increase the dose to fifteen drops. Finding that it was not successful in arresting the incontinence, of her own accord the mother increased the dose to a half- teaspoonful three times per day with no perceptible injury but without success. On hearing this report I requested the father of the little girl to bring to my office a few ounces of her urine, the first she passed after sleeping, for analysis. On testing it for albumen I discovered that it contained a considerable quantity of this substance, and I prescribed iodide of potassium, resulting in a complete cure of her incontinence.

“I think it best to report the unsuccessful with the successful cases. The want of success in the treatment of the last-named case was no doubt due to the presence of albumen in the urine, and this complication with the incontinence demanded the addition of a different remedy. This case also illustrates the necessity of frequent analysis of the urine in troubles arising from a morbid condition of the urine or the organs engaged in the production of this secretion.”

Dr. J. H. Egan, Pulaski, Tenn., says in *The Medical Brief*. “I have treated two cases of incontinence of urine, and three cases of diarrhea, by means of fluid extract of *Rhus aromatica*. My prescription was:

R.—*Rhus aromatica*, fluid extract, drs. iiss.
Elixir simplicis ad. oz. ij.
M. Sig. A teaspoonful three times daily.

One bottle sufficed to cure a case that had existed for many years; the patient having been compelled to wear a urinal day and night. Four effected a cure in two cases of diarrhoea, while it required two bottles for the third case, which had existed for twelve years. No other treatment of any other kind was prescribed.

W. W. Morrison, of Rockford, Ill., also records a difficult case of enuresis treated with this remedy, namely: “I was called March 21st to see Rev. H. J. H., aged 80. Found the old gentleman low-spirited and with no hope of relief. His ailment was enuresis, from which he had suffered for many years to a degree necessitating his confinement at home. I ordered fluid extract of *Rhus aromatica* in twenty-drop doses five times a day. He reported relief from the first dose, and after a few doses had been taken he could retain his urine for three or four hours. The relief, however, was not complete because if he slept over three hours there was an involuntary micturition. I increased the dose to thirty drops, and at the end of two weeks the old gentleman reported that although not entirely well, which he never expected to be, his life had been made endurable; and that if he should not further improve he would still have occasion for great thankfulness in the improvement wrought by the medicine.”

J. W. Pruitt, of Russellville, Ark., communicates to the *Eclectic Medical Journal*, as follows:

Case 1.—Mrs. A., too profuse menstruation; appears every two to three

weeks. I had tried ergot, macrotys, and cinnamon, with only partial or temporary benefit:

R.—*Rhus aromaticæ* tincturi, oz. iiss.
Water, oz. iij.
A teaspoonful every two or three hours until relieved.

This course was persevered in for three or four periods, and now the lady is quite “regular” with no further trouble.

Case 2.—March 6, 1880, S. A. M., aged 8 years; wet the bed every night; “has been so a long time.”

R.—*Rhus aromaticæ*, Tr., drs. iiss.
Fowler’s solution, drs. ss.
Water q. s. to make, oz. iv.

Teaspoonful three times per day till better; then twice per day for a long while; then once per day at night. To pass the water on going to bed and through the night. March 21, no better. R. *Rhus aromatica*, gtt. 20, three times per day. March 27, some improvement.

R.—*Rhus aromaticæ*, drs. xiiss.
Aquæ q.s. to make, oz. iv.
Teaspoonful morning and night.

April 3, better. I continued the treatment. April 17, better in every respect. I gave one dose at night only, and to be sure, made patient pass water before going to bed every night. In both these cases there appeared to be laxity of the tissues; pale, sodden appearance of the skin, and small, weak pulse.

A. M. Hayden, M. D., Evansville, Ind., says: “The introduction of the *Rhus aromatica* has supplied the physician. with an efficient remedy against that very annoying condition of the bladder which gives rise to incontinence of urine. The mode of its action seems to be through its specific tonic influence on the bladder, and particularly on the sphincters of that viscus. I have, at least, been unable to detect any such influence either on the quantity or character of the urine as would explain its beneficial action. Mrs. B., act. 27, the mother of two children, had, since her last confinement, eighteen months previous, been troubled with incontinence of urine. Her case was a very aggravated one, the urine being voided almost immediately on entering the bladder, there seeming to be complete paralysis of the sphincter. The condition of

paralysis was probably the result of the fetal head during parturition. The patient had been treated by several able physicians, but without benefit. On undertaking the case I presumed that the standard remedies had been resorted to, and placed her on *Rhus aromatica*, in ten-drop doses of the fluid extract three times a day. In three days the lady called at my office and reported herself much improved. In two weeks, the treatment being continued, the bladder was able to retain the normal quantity of urine, and the recovery was regarded as complete. In this case there was no acidity of urine to account for the incontinence, and the history of the case pointed plainly to the sphincter as the seat of the trouble. The prompt action of *Rhus aromatica* leads me to suppose that the drug acts directly on the sphincter; but whether it does so directly or indirectly through nervous force I leave for some one else to determine.”

Prof Edwin Younkin, M. D., St. Louis, has had valuable results from *Rhus aromatica* in the treatment of some cases of uterine hemorrhage and spongy gums.

The following is an extract from a letter received from A. F. Pettee, M. D., Fellow Massachusetts Medical Society, and late Professor of Chemistry and Materia Medica in the New England Female Medical College, Boston, Mass.: “I have used the *Rhus aromatica* in twenty cases of enuresis and all were cured, and no relapses. I like it better than any other medicine I have ever used. I have also used it in twenty cases of profuse menstruation with most happy results; two of the cases were in women who had been married a number of years, but had never been pregnant. They wanted children; never had resorted to any means to prevent conception; after marriage they were regular for two years, then they began to fall short a day or two, and the times would last from seven to ten days; and at length they would come on every fifteen days. Examination by touch and speculum showed a relaxed condition of the sexual organs. I should have said that they had been under medical treatment before I saw them. I gave them tincture of *Rhus aromatica* in ten-drop doses every two hours, In six weeks they were both pregnant and well pleased. They have given birth to fine, large babies. I like the action of *Rhus aromatica* in cholera infantum; have cured a hundred cases of it the past season. For the diarrhea of typhoid fever, it is all I could desire. It is a valuable remedy for nursing sore mouth, and some forms of dyspepsia. On the whole, I think it a great acquisition to our Materia Medica.”

The following is from my worthy friend, Prof. S. H. Potter, M. D., Hamilton, Ohio: "I used the *Rhus aromatica* which you sent, and after that I used it prepared by Parke, Davis & Co., testing its properties pretty thoroughly. I find it useful in enuresis and hematuria, in persons of all ages; also in diabetes, menorrhagia and leucorrhoea. It also has proved beneficial in atonic diarrhea and chronic dysentery, in the young and aged. I consider it a remedy having a wide range of usefulness, especially in these diseases peculiar to the genito-urinary organs, and mucous membranes, generally of a chronic form. I shall be pleased to learn further of the experiences of other practitioners with the *Rhus aromatica*, and if it proves as valuable as it seems to have done in the cases in which I have employed it, I expect to see it become official, alone, and combined with other remedies in our pharmacopoeia. You certainly deserve credit for having introduced it to the notice of the profession."

Albert Merrell, Professor of Chemistry, says: "I am decidedly impressed with the great remedial value of the *Rhus aromatica*, though its sphere is in a sense limited. It seems to me that there is a single underlying condition, which, being present, *Rhus aromatica* will benefit. This condition is one of passive engorgement of mucous membranes, due to relaxation of the coats of its vessels. At certain stages, this results in excessive fluxes, mucous or watery, and later, in structural lesions with hemorrhages of venous blood. I have never analyzed it, nor have I seen a statement of the proximate constituents of the drug, but from the evident presence of a balsamic resin (probably a mixture of a volatile oil and resin) and of gallic acid, one would naturally suppose its action to, simulate both of gallic acid in restraining hemorrhages from mucous surfaces, and the resinous balsams (bals. Peru, gum turpentine, yerba santa, etc.), in controlling catarrhal conditions. My experience confirms this expectation. I do not think it will prove valuable in inflammatory or highly irritable conditions of mucous membranes, nor in active hemorrhage."

C. D. Kirk, M. D., of Fern Springs, Miss., adds his experience and opinion thus: "I have prescribed the *Rhus aromatica* in various urinary troubles, and am convinced that it is quite a potent remedy, and that it has not been over-rated by its discoverer. A case of chronic disease of the bladder in a woman, yielded to *Rhus aromatica* after resisting many remedies. Another of menorrhagia was speedily cured. I am now treating an old case of diabetes with *Rhus* and *Lycopus*, which I think is doing well."

Dr. Isador Welte, Monticello, Ind., writes me in regard to a case in his own family, as follows:

“It is almost a year since I communicated with you concerning *Rhus aromatica*, and a boy of mine who was afflicted, and very badly, with enuresis, due to relaxation of the urinary organs. I sent for some of the *Rhus aromatica* and received it. But while it was on the way, I made use of electricity and the boy got better; but it did not last very long, and he got worse again. I now resorted to *Rhus aromatica*, prepared as you directed. Formula: R. *Rhus aromaticæ*, mix. xv., water, oz. iij. Dose: A teaspoonful morning and evening for a week; then for three weeks the second dilution, then for three weeks the third dilution, and the boy got well. Here I will say the third dilution had the best effect. The advantage is not always in large doses.”

Henry Holt, M. D., Brooklyn, N. Y., sojourning at present at the Eureka Springs, Ark., writes from that place, viz.:

“I am still using the *Rhus aromatica* in all my cases of urinary troubles with very satisfactory results, and hardly know how I could get along without it. I recently treated a case, a lady, whose urine was about one-third albumen, with the *Rhus*, with most gratifying results, all the albumen having disappeared in three or four days. I hope to hear of its use in true Bright's disease.”

Dr. E. C. Thomas, of Cleveland, has found the “ to be useful in many forms of disease other than those for which it is recommended: “Indeed,” says the doctor, “its value cannot be estimated in all forms of disease where the waste of tissue is greater than the supply. Especially is this the case in chronic forms, or where the disordered action consists in a too active secondary digestion, and deficient primary; that is, with disintegration and progressive metamorphosis supplying the organ or organs with newly-formed tissues. In all such cases *Rhus* has no superior. What is its composition and upon what set of elements does their arrangement depend? are natural questions. It is surely astringent, but this property is only its effect; in its composition it differs from tannic and gallic acids because its action is very different from either of the above; hence we find it contains other elements peculiar to itself that will control conditions requiring the aid of an astringent which neither tannic nor gallic acid will control.”

My distinguished friend and neighbor, Dr. S. Dentist, suffered from measles, in 1867, which left a sequel in the shape of an irritable bladder and urethra. His condition grew from "bad to worse," until he was compelled to get up from five to eight times per night to void his urine. He could not retain to exceed half a gill at anytime, because of a distressing pressure at the orifice of the bladder. He anxiously sought relief, but without success. By and by the war came on, and, to use his own expression, he entered the service, "hoping to get relief or to have his bottom knocked out." But he went through unscathed, and, to his partial satisfaction, much improved in regard to his urinary difficulty; but he has been troubled with the same more or less ever since, to within a few months ago. He was in my office one day, and during our conversation he related the above, substantially. I then mentioned *Rhus aromatica* and its uses, and proposed that he take an ounce of the tincture and test it. He did so somewhat reluctantly, because he had very little faith that any remedy would benefit him. I ordered him to take five drops three times a day, and the fourth dose on retiring. Some weeks afterward, I asked him what my remedy had done for him, and his reply was: "I don't know whether it is simply a coincidence or not; I only have to get up once during the night, about 4 A. M., and I now suffer very little inconvenience." It is now several months since he ceased taking it, and he has experienced no return. He still, as a rule, rises once each night to urinate; but considering the fact that he is quite fleshy, and had this trouble so long, it can hardly be expected that he will ever be able to retain his urine during the whole of the night. The Doctor has since referred an old friend of his to me, suffering from a similar difficulty, who has likewise experienced much benefit from *Rhus aromatica*.

No doubt that a continued use of it by the profession will ere long assign to *Rhus* its exact sphere in our *Materia Medica* and therapeutics. My humble opinion is, that it will, sooner or later, rank among the most worthy of our indigenous remedies. Of this much, I am sure that, with the case well selected and with a fluid extract or tincture properly prepared from the fresh bark of the root of a prime article, it will bring positive results. I use a saturated tincture of my own make, but a fluid extract is no doubt as efficacious, and perhaps more uniform. The dose varies with me from one to twenty drops, seldom more, according to age and the nature of the case, repeated from one to four times per day in chronic diseases, and in acute troubles, as often as may be considered necessary. I use the *Rhus* alone, alternated, and combined with other remedies, when I think they are indicated, otherwise, I am

apprehensive the beneficial effects might in many instances be lost. It is not always the case that we can determine just where, and what the basic lesion is, and again there are oftentimes complementary parts to diseases which, if helped along with the appropriate remedy, will many times greatly facilitate its action by at least rendering the patient more comfortable until the prime disturbance is overcome. This matter, however, I leave to the discretion of each individual physician to determine, according to the individual circumstances of the case in hand.

With these remarks and the foregoing experiences, no one need be led astray in the selection and therapeutical use of this agent.