

GINSENG.

The Chinese call Ginseng Orkota, that is, the first of all plants, and consider it the most costly produce of the earth, diamonds excepted, and ascribe to it the most wonderful healing properties. The prices named by the missionaries for the root have been almost fabulous, a single root being valued in Manchuria at from £250 to £300. Along the river it sells for £30 per Russian pound, but in a bad year Chinese count it as valuable as gold, and give as high as £40 per pound. In China no chemist shop is complete without it. They say that it is a specific in all bodily ailments, to cure consumption when half the lungs are gone, and to restore to dotards the fire of youth.

The wild ginseng of Siberia is said to be the best, and a great deal of it is collected by the Goldi natives, who go out by hundreds from May to September to seek the valuable plant. The natives along the Ussuri river use it boiled for headaches, colds, fevers and stomach aches. In this county, where the *Panax quinquefolium* is indigenous, it is often used in domestic practice as an anodyne for after-pains. Some time ago I confined a large and fleshy woman, who was the mother of several children, and who had always suffered more or less from after-pains, generally to that degree as to require medical aid. On this occasion I left her a few doses of *Morphine* and powdered gum *Camphor*, to be taken if necessary. Two days after her confinement the husband came to see me concerning her after-pains, which had not been relieved by the powders. As I was absent at the time, he went home without any medicine, and found there an old woman who had administered ginseng tea, which had given relief.—T. G. Stephens in *Medical Summary*.

The *Encyclopædia* and Allen's *Hand-book* have quite extensive provings of *Ginseng*.

A PASSIFLORA CASE.

Dr. D. F. Bickford, of Atlanta, Ga., describes a case he was called upon to treat as follows, in *Georgia Eclectic Medical Journal*:

"On January 2, about 10 A. M., I was called to see the child of Mr. A. On my arrival I found patient very nervous, temperature, 101.5; pulse, 140; respiration, 45; bowels discharging every few minutes; discharges watery and very foul. It was also vomiting every few minutes, and any fluid entering the stomach was immediately rejected. The history of the case was this: The

child had been taken sick four days before, and although the mother administered all known domestic remedies, it gradually grew worse. I at once diagnosed cholera infantum, and prescribed accordingly, and in harmony with indications, and left. Called next day at 9 A. M.; found patient somewhat better; had rested reasonably well during the night, and had nursed some during the morning; directed old treatment to be continued and retired. At 2:30 that afternoon was called hastily; child worse and parents very much alarmed. On arriving at the bedside found patient very much excited, tossing from side to side, almost in spasms. On examining the patient closely found stomach contracted into a hard lump, which would relax for a few moments only to contract again more severely."

He administered "anti-spasmodics" of all sorts, but the case grew more desperate. When at his wits' ends he remembered hearing of *Passiflora*; went out and borrowed some from a brother doctor and gave it to the child, who gradually grew quiet, went to sleep and made good recovery. In connection with the *Passiflora* he gave *Bismuth*, giving the latter first, which was immediately vomited up. A teaspoonful of *Passiflora* quieted the child and enabled it to retain the next dose of *Bismuth*, after which *Passiflora* was given alone.

In this connection the following extract from a letter from the Rev. C. T. Bland, of Marion, N. C., may be of interest:

"I value THE RECORDER very highly, and will say that finding the use of the *Passiflora Inc.*, by reading it, is worth more than the year's subscription. I have used it in several cases of insomnia—adults, five drop doses; infants, one drop—and so far it has not failed. I induced a physician (Allopath) to try it for nervousness, and this is what he says: 'I've tried it on self and others with good results. It certainly acts nicely in nervousness.'"

THE THERAPEUTIC VALUE OF CACTUS GRANDIFLORUS.

I have used *Cactus* since 1874. Heretofore I have used it principally in chronic diseases, but during the past two years have used it in continued fevers where the pulse was especially rapid and weak. The effect of the remedy in these cases has been very satisfactory, the pulse almost invariable becoming slower and the heart gaining in power. I am now treating two

cases of cardiac dilation, with *Anasarca* and *Œdema* of the lower extremities, in one of which there is valvular disease with dyspnoea, and in both of which the swelling of the feet and legs was enormous. Digitalis, diuretics, and cathartics had no permanent good effects. I gave each case tincture of *Apocynum* alone, with but temporary benefit. I then gave each of them *Cactus* and *Apocynum*, five drops of each t. i. d., since which time improvement has been rapid and steady. They have now been using these two remedies two months, and the swelling has almost entirely disappeared, while in the one case the dyspnoea is very much relieved, so much so that the patient can lie down in bed to sleep instead of sitting up as formerly. These patients are seventy and sixty-four years old respectively. I have found *Cactus* an admirable remedy in many cases of cold extremities, depending wholly or partially upon a debilitated condition of the system, following upon sexual excesses of many years' duration. In some cases of weakened or failing memory, depending on nervous debility, *Cactus* has been of much value.

Since publishing my letter on "*Cactus*" in the *Medical News* some two or more years ago, I have had many communications from physicians all over the country, some commending, others condemning it. Those who saw no good effects from its use I invariably found had used some unreliable preparation. I use a tincture made from the recent plant, in the proportion of four ounces to the pint of *Alcohol*. Any one who expects good results from inferior preparations will be disappointed.—*C. L. Gregory, M. D., in Therap. Gazette.*

INTESTINAL WORMS.

Often the physician is met with the question: "Doctor, don't you think my child is wormy?" And many times the answer should be in the affirmative when it is not. Worms in the intestines or the stomach will perpetuate a simple fever, diarrhoea or dysentery from day to day, when it might have been relieved at once by some anthelmintic, which is often given by the mother or some neighboring lady, to the great discomfort of the doctor. The indication of worms has not always been clear to me, and doubtless every physician has had a similar experience. I am confident now, however, that their presence may be certainly known. They are indicated by a small, contracted pallid tongue, with *purplish red spots* [not papillas], which grow thicker towards

the end. It is common for the abdomen to become bloated, lips and eyelids swollen, especially of mornings. But wherever the above described tongue is, the *ascaris lumbricoidis* are present, no matter what else may be the matter. This tongue is frequently met with in chronic diarrhoea and dysenteric discharges of children.—*F. M. Baker, M. D., in Georgia Eclectic Journal.*

SOLANUM CAROLINENSE.

Dr. Abram Smead, of Sandy Ford, Va., writes to the editor of *Notes on New Remedies* as follows: "I saw in the *Virginia Medical Monthly*, September, 1889, that Dr. G. L. Napier, of Blenheim, S. C., had used a tincture of the *Horse-nettle* with great success in epilepsy. I wrote to Dr. Napier to know what part of the plant he used, and how much to the pint of the menstruum. He replied that he filled a bottle half full of the ripe berries, bruised, and filled it up with 60 per cent. *Alcohol*, and gave a teaspoonful four times a day. He also stated in the same letter that he prescribed it for a gentleman who had been epileptic for eight years; the gentleman, misunderstanding the dose, took a tablespoonful four times a day. After taking it for a week he returned to the doctor and told him that he could not take the remedy any longer, as it kept him drunk all time. He has not had a fit since he took the remedy. Dr. Napier also wrote that each dose should produce a feeling of drowsiness, and in obstinate cases he gave it every three hours until there were symptoms of vertigo. He also stated that it controlled puerperal convulsions."

ON HEMORRHOIDS.

By Dr. Mackechnie.

A paper read at the Bath before the Western Therapeutic Society.

Mr. President and Gentlemen: When asked by our indefatigable Secretary to read a paper, and what its subject would be, I chose that of Hemorrhoids, not that I expected to bring any special acumen to the subject, or that I could expect to teach you anything new in the pathology or therapeutics of piles, but that it is a convenient peg on which to hang a discussion; that so little seems to be said about it in modern days by physicians, who seem inclined to leave the matter wholly to one remedy, *Ferrum*, whether *frigidum* or *calidum*, or both, and that I am desirous to

enter my feeble protest against this indiscriminate use of the knife in such cases, especially as I am afraid that amongst our own colleagues there is too great a tendency to relegate the treatment of piles to the surgeon. Of course, in this, as in many other matters, we are not masters of the field, and are subject to many influences, direct and indirect, but particularly to that of our colleagues of the old school, who, in their agnosticism as to the value of drugs, have nothing to fall back upon in the treatment of piles, but the relief to be obtained in the removal of the damaged part.

We, too, on our part, are many of us wanting in that faith in drug influence, which should enable us firmly to withstand the entreaties of patient and friend, by promising that time and perseverance will do what is wanted without mutilation. We are also influenced by the influx into our number of many new and younger practitioners, and glad we are to welcome them; but they are new from the schools, necessarily more or less under school influence, with some tincture of the aforesaid agnosticism, and knowing the value of similars but imperfectly, while they are able in the use of the knife, and in the ardour of youth lean strongly to the faith in things seen and tangible.

Hence, patients coming to us under the influence of this distressing malady of piles, requiring, as it sometimes does, prolonged and patient treatment of various kinds, are often unable, or unwilling, to give the time, trouble and patience needful to work out a real cure, and desire, especially now that anesthetics and antiseptics are to the fore, the speedy riddance of their painful and disgusting encumbrances.

Now, I am desirous of saying a few words in the hope of staying the tide which is carrying us towards surgery rather than Homœopathy in this connection, and I think we should keep constantly before us the fact that we are advocates of the principle of similars; that every case which is operated on under our care is more or less a slur on that principle, which, notwithstanding, *is* capable in almost every case of effecting a cure. Of course, a great difficulty in bad cases is the need for time and careful nursing. Every case must, of course, be decided on its own merits; one cannot make any absolute rule, but it is for us to keep before the patient and his friends the fact that drug influence, with time and perseverance, *can* cure.

Our method of treating a case of piles must be largely modified by the conditions which brought about the attack, and the extent of the mischief done. It is scarcely needful for me to say anything here about the influence of occupation in the matter.

Whenever a case of piles comes under our care, we may be pretty sure that stasis and distension have been going on for long before we were applied to, and indeed for long before the patient became conscious of any embarrassment, so that even now when seeking our aid he has been first trying some treatment of his own, or of his neighbors, and putting off the application to his doctor as long as might be, but that now, some error of diet or drink, some chill adding to the embarrassment of the circulation, or a purge which, while softening the stool and stirring up the muscular coat to action, has brought about additional congestion of the hemorrhoidal plexuses; and, while swelling yet further the superior plexus, has irritated the sphincter and hindered the lower plexus from returning its contents to the superior; has rendered the mucous membrane irritable and congested, the arteries dilated and congested—so that, taking the whole local pathological condition in view, one need scarcely wonder at the distress and suffering witnessed in a case of inflamed piles, and one's first thought should be how to give relief, to free the occluded veins. Though it may seem most scientific to try and relieve at the hither end, yet so much is to be done at the *locus in quo* by heat and moisture combined, that I think it well to begin with these agents, either by hot hipbath, or by steaming, or by fomentation; any of them well applied. I am myself very fond of steaming, but either will help very much to give relief and enable the patient generally to return the obtruded swelling through the sphincter. There are two points in this connection I am surprised constantly to find medical men so negligent in instructing their patients about. First, as to the method of getting the hemorrhoidal tumor returned within the sphincter, by bearing down as if in defecation at the same time that pressure is made gently and equally on the mass to get it into the rectum; at the same time some grease should be applied to lubricate it. Once get the tumours within the sphincter, the strangulation is over for the time, there is a certain sense of relief afforded, and the patient begins to feel that something is being done.

In cases of fluent piles, pressure may better be made with a warm moist sponge.

It may then be well to consider the need or anvisability of relieving the bowels, and to find out if the rectum is loaded with hardened feces or not. In many cases it *is* worth while, and when needful I have a great liking for the Pulv. Glycirrhizæ Co. (prussian preparation), which I consider better than *Enemata*, although it takes twelve hours before it acts; but the means employed should depend rather on the habits of the patient, on

his fears, his prejudices—before all, on the state of the fecal masses themselves, so far as that can be made out. If an *Enema* is used, I prefer thin warm gruel, with a plentiful admixture of *Olive oil*.

Having emptied the rectum, comes the consideration of the real drug treatment of the case, and I think one should at once administer *Aconite* or *Belladonna*, or perhaps give them alternately, being guided very much in this matter by the indications given by the thermometer, general febrile condition being the predominant indication for *Aconite*, and local active congestion, or inflammation, for *Belladonna*. In children with inflamed piles I always take *Chamomilla* well into consideration.

The dietary, of course, should be very carefully managed, generally should be but slightly azotized, not fatty nor alcoholized, leaving the patient but little else than farinaceous, vegetable, and fruity foods—all spices should be avoided, as they undoubtedly tend to irritate the part affected. This leads one to the consideration of one medicine, viz., *Capsicum*, which I have sometimes used with good effect in inflammatory piles. The special indications are, frequent small mucous stool with intense tenesmus after it.

Capsicum seems to be of use in fluent as well as blind piles, but the bleeding, when it occurs, is rather a general oozing than a hemorrhage from the varices themselves.

With these means we shall not long have to treat a case of inflamed piles before the great pain and inflammatory state will have so far subsided that the patient can be moving about, and able to perform his duties more or less freely; and then comes the question of further treatment, so that a really curative method may be put into operation.

Perhaps the most important considerations now are, the sex of the patient, and the habit of the bowels. If constipation be habitual; if there be a feeling of obstruction or of dryness; if the stools are dry, and hard, and in largish masses, either smooth or of agglutinated masses of scybala, one must think of *Æsculus*, especially if there be a dull aching pain over the lumbo-sacral region. Before *Æsculus* was brought well before the profession as a remedy in hemorrhoids with constipation, one was in the habit of looking principally to *Nux vomica* and *Sulphur*, one or both, in such cases, but every one seems to think that *Æsculus* has almost superseded them.

It may be as appropriate a place as any to say here, for many years I have made it a great point in cases of chronic or habitual piles to insist on my patients adopting the practice of emptying

the rectum at night before going to bed rather than at the usual one of doing so in the morning. The disturbed congested part has the time of the night's rest to recover itself, and the patient is much more likely to be able to go about his duties next day. It is often difficult to establish the habit, for the bowels are apt to relapse into their old established method, will not go at night, and will go in the morning; but the gain is so great that the patient should be strongly urged to persevere.

After *Æsculus* I think there is scarcely a better remedy than *Pulsatilla*, whether for acute or chronic, whether fluent or dry, whether in male or female. Its marked influence on the venous system, its still more marked influence on the digestive functions and on the mucous membranes wherever they may be, should point to *Pulsatilla* as a medicine bringing about a group of symptoms very closely similar to that we find in piles. Of course, where the special temperament or constitution is strongly marked, we may look for the more striking effects, but there can be no doubt that *Pulsatilla* suits very many cases of piles even amongst men. It is by no means only the female sex that is to be influenced by this potent drug. Wherever passive congestions occur, and especially where there is tendency to chronic catarrhal conditions, *Pulsatilla* should be taken into consideration; even constipation is not absolutely a contra-indication, but when one has hemorrhoids, dyspepsia, catarrhal tendency, varicosis elsewhere than in the rectum, dysmenorrhœa or spasmorrhœa, it ought to suggest itself to one before almost any other drug in our *Materia Medica*.

Sulphur covers so much the same lines as *Pulsatilla* as to call for consideration in such cases; but the points in which it is chiefly distinguished are the presence of constipation, and the severe itching about the anus in sulphur symptoms.

Sulphur comes in alternately with *Æsculus* or with *Nux Vomica* in a large number of cases where there is constipation. Two or three days of the one and two or three days of the other is a convenient arrangement.

Nux is called for mostly among men, especially those who are given to the use of alcohol or of spices, or old dyspeptics, &c. (People who are subject to piles should, as a general rule, become abstainers.)

The constipation of *Nux* is one where there is want of expulso-ry desire, but where there is great relief after evacuation; there is frequent and ineffectual call nevertheless. The stool is hard or dry, there is pressure on the sacrum, but not so constant nor so marked as that from *Æsculus*. The piles are generally large and blind.

Collinsonia is a medicine of great value in piles, especially in those females who have inertia of the rectum, and general congestive tendency to the pelvis. It is especially valuable to pregnant women suffering from piles, and in the piles so often to be found in parturient women. Pruritus is here also a very marked symptom, while flatulence, colic, and tenesmus are additional indications for it.

While talking of pelvic congestion as a cause of piles, one must hardly pass by a classical remedy for such a state, though at the same time I will say that of late I have not used it, *Collinsonia* having taken its place—I mean *Aloes*, which produces a general abdominal, and specially a pelvic, congestion. There is very marked burning in the anus and tenesmus, often with faintness, and the bladder is often irritated.

I have already spoken of such cases of fluent hemorrhoids as are largely benefited by *Pulsatilla*—but though this last remedy is probably that of the largest range in piles in general, yet there are many cases in which one would much prefer employing *Hamamelis*, viz., such as present the fluent character in the most marked degree. Its wonderful influence on the venous system suggests it as a most valuable remedy, and experience carries out our expectation. It is especially in fluent piles with copious bleeding that it will speedily modify and arrest, and that without the fear one has been accustomed to hold of “the arrest of the hemorrhoidal flux.”

The less fluent forms, if associated with varicosities or any indications of venous troubles, may make *Hamamelis* worthy of precedence before *Pulsatilla*, while the catarrhal state of the mucous membrane may give *Pulsatilla* the precedence.

My time is running short, but there is one medicine, viz., *Muriatic Acid*, I must mention, which I have found of very great value, especially among people advanced in years whose piles continue to trouble them. The piles are large and painful, very tender, and suggest that ulceration has taken or is likely to take place. In such cases there is a general adynamia, and an offensive odor of the breath and of other secretions is often present.

When hemorrhoids have gone on so far, or have been so frequently renewed, that the various layers of the rectum and anus become thickened, while the tumours themselves, the varices, create irregularities where ulcers are very likely to develop, and which from their position take peculiar forms as in so-called anal fissure, if any conditions consequent on piles can justify the use of the knife it will be these; but I am sure that in these cases, if the patient can and will give the time, the attention, and the

nursing that such a case requires, we may do perfectly well without the metal.

The great requirement is the careful and continual cleansing of the rectum, which must be effected with as little disturbance to the part as possible, almost absolute rest being needed by the patient. *Calendula* as a local application is most useful, and I have heard *Hydrastis* equally vaunted. The stools must be kept in a soluble condition, if possible, by means of suitable diet, e.g., fruit, tamarinds, &c., &c. I am quite inclined to think that *Cocaine* in weak solution is not only justifiable, but of real utility in such cases.

I have used *Ignatia*, *Æsculus*, *Graphites*, and many other medicines in such cases with more or less advantage, but I think I have derived most benefit from the two latter.

I can say that I have cured a good many cases of fistula in ano without the knife, in fact I consider this affection much more tractable than the affection I have just been talking of, but it requires equally rest for its treatment, and careful nursing and syringing.

The remedies I have used have been *Silicea* almost exclusively *Calcareea* a little as internal remedies, and *Calendula* and *Hydrastis* and water-glass as local remedies.

I have at present here in Bath under my temporary care a patient who was cured by our friend A. C. Clifton many years ago (about fifty) of fistula in ano, and who remains cured now. He had been condemned for operation by one of the chief London surgeons of the day, went home to Northampton, submitted himself to Clifton's care, got cured, and went back to the surgeon, thinking he would be delighted to hear of a remedy for a disorder which he could only himself cure with the knife, and was quite astonished at the indignation that gentleman showed on hearing the said report!

It is scarcely needful for me to say that I have only attempted to give a glance at the medicines I have found of the principal use in these affections, that I will not longer keep you.—*Hom. World.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

BLACK RIVER FALLS, Wis., August 26, 1891.

EDITOR OF RECORDER: I was requested, as Secretary of our medical society, to send a notice to the different medical journals. A few of us met here at our office on July 11, 1891, and formed