

speaking of these doctrines of secretion in general, thus apostrophizes in particular the M. Segalas of our text:—"M. Segalas goes even further than this, and condemns cow's milk in scrofula, not only because it contains albumen, but because cows, as shown by M. Huzard, are very liable to tubercular accretions! By what process, or series of processes, these are to pass *en masse* out of the body of the cow with her milk, and again into the body of the drinker thereof, does not immediately appear." He then goes on to show how this doctrine might be further applied, and the folly of such application. "But granting that the secreting vessels are thus easily influenced with respect to the nature of the organized matters which they deposit, we need be at no loss at any time for a new pleura or peritoneum, a new nervous system, or a new set of muscles, as occasion may require; since, without trying to manufacture them in a laboratory, as some persons have presumed that we shall in no long time be competent to do, they may easily be got by feeding on isinglass or carpenter's glue, on the white of eggs, or on the clot of the blood of bulls or of goats. M. Bonhomme's suggestion of taking crude phosphate of lime in rickets, for the purpose of setting new bones, was a mere bagatelle to what may be done in this way." (See Ryan's London Medical and Surgical Journal, Feb. 21, 1835.)

No wonder that M. Segalas "employed urea in diabetes, but without success!"—*Tr.*]

#### OIL OF THE EUPHORBIA LATYRIS.\*

The euphorbia latyris, or spurge, is an indigenous annual of the family of Euphorbiaceæ, and, like all that

\* *Giornale di Farmacia chimica*, 1824. Dr. Carlo Calderini has obtained an oil from the seeds of the *euphorbia latyris*, or *casaputia minor*, which may be used as a substitute for that of the *croton tiglium*. Its purgative qualities have, however, been long known.

family, contains an irritating juice. Its seeds have latterly been recommended as a substitute for ipecacuanha.

*Process for obtaining the Oil.*

When the seeds are very ripe they are to be dried, and the black ones separated, because they turn rancid; the oil is then obtained by simple pressure; fourteen ounces of the seeds give six ounces of very pure oil.

*Physical Properties of Spurge Oil.*

It very much resembles castor oil, and has even the same colour: it is not quite so dense, has no smell, is not acrid, and has no unpleasant taste: it is perfectly limpid.

By keeping, particularly in warm weather, it becomes turbid and rancid, and has then a pungent taste. It burns with a bright white flame, without smoke. It is insoluble in alcohol, even when highly rectified. With the alkalis it forms a soap.

*Action on the Animal System.*

The action of this oil is purgative, its effect certain and speedy. It may be considered, says the Italian author, as a very mild purgative: it causes no vomiting, no colic, no tenesmus: it may even be administered in dysentery, when the intestinal irritation is great, with as much benefit as tamarind-pulp.

Dr. Bally maintains that this oil induces vomiting almost as much as the croton oil.

Gilibert mentions it as a violent drastic; and Peryllius says that an oven heated with this plant renders the bread baked in it purgative. Sangiorgo, in his *Histoire des Plantes médicamenteuses*, speaks of the plant in these terms: *Purgante vi infamis quod ad abigendum fatum adhibeatur. Præstat autem et hæc, et totâ gente abstinuisse cum causticæ sint, et nimis indomabiles.*

*Cases in which it has been administered.*

It has been used as a purgative in quotidian gastric fever; in dysentery, when the signs of enteric irritation were well marked, and sense of anxiety in the primæ viæ distressing; in the anasarca that supervenes on intermittent fevers; and, indeed, in all cases where slight purgation with a small dose of medicine is desirable.

*Mode of administration.*

The dose to adults varies from four to eight drops. Three drops mixed in chocolate have been given to children two or three years of age.

In very excitable persons an excellent effect is produced by an emulsion composed with eight drops of the oil, and rendered palatable by some aromatic water and syrup of orange-peel.

The same dose may be administered in a glass of sugar and water.

[According to experiments made by M. Martin Solon at the Hôtel Beaujon, with the oil of euphorbia latyris, it appears: first, that the oil prepared by expression, by alcohol or ether, is of easy employment; 2, that none of these preparations have any sensible operation on adults in the dose of 2 to 8 drops; 3, that in the dose from 16 to 24 drops, the two first have decided emeto-cathartic properties, and the third one in the same dose is only purgative; 4, in the dose of 2 scruples to a drachm, the emeto-cathartic effects become more decided in the two former oils, even sometimes to cause syncope; the oil prepared by ether is equally purgative with that obtained by expression, purges somewhat more than the oil obtained by alcohol, and does not cause syncope, and must be raised to a drachm and a half in dose to produce vomiting also; 5, that the maximum dose of any of them is 3 drachms; 6, that they are applicable in jaundice, gastric disorders, lead colic, vermination, &c.—*Tr.*]