

PHARMACOPCEIAL VEGETABLE DRUGS.

necessary. It may be briefly stated that this insidiously active drug came to the attention of the profession of medicine through its well-known qualities, as established by the people of its native land. Much the writer recorded concerning opium and its culture as noted in his travels in Turkey, is to be found in Lloyd Brothers' Drug Treatise No. XXII, "Opium and Its Compounds."

PAREIRA

Pareira brava (*Chondrodendron tomentosum*) is a climbing shrub, native to Peru and Brazil, and adjacent sections of South America. The Portuguese missionaries of the seventeenth century who visited Brazil learned of its reputed qualities from the natives, who under the name *abutua* or *butua* valued it highly for its therapeutic virtues. The Portuguese gave it the name *Pareira brava*, or *wild vine*, with reference to its mode of growth. Its reputed medicinal qualities, learned from the natives, were made conspicuous by Michel Amelot, ambassador of Louis XIV to Lisbon, who found it in that city and carried it with him to Paris. The botanist Pomet (519), 1694, described the plant in his "History of Drugs," Paris. After an eventful botanical record embracing considerable discussion as well as confusion with some other drugs, during which Pareira brava enjoyed professional conspicuity in Europe, it dropped from general use, the extraordinary pretensions long made for it being now practically forgotten.

PEPO

The seed of the pumpkin, *Cucurbita pepo*, in the form of an infusion as well as in a pulpy mass, has been long a favorite home remedy for intestinal parasites, which use introduced it to the medical profession. Although the medical profession has used pumpkin seed somewhat in this direction, as a rule they now prefer other remedial agents, santonin being employed for round worms and pomegranate bark for tape worms.

PHYSOSTIGMA

Physostigma, Calabar bean (*Physostigma venenosum*), is the fruit of an African vine growing near the mouths of the Niger and the Old Calabar Rivers, Guinea, where it furnished one of the ordeal tests of the pagan tribes of tropical Western Africa. The seed is therefore known as the "Ordeal Bean," and was administered in the form of either an emulsion or infusion, as the case might be. It was introduced to England by Dr. F. W. Daniel (182), about 1840, its method of use being again mentioned by him in a paper read before the Ethnological Society, 1846. Professor Balfour (36), of Edinburgh, obtained the plant from the Rev. W. C. Thompson, a missionary to the west coast of Africa, and described it in a paper read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, including it also in his "History of Plants." Its power of contracting the pupil of the eye was discovered by Dr. T. R. Fraser (246) of Edinburgh. Its power of paralyzing the

PHARMACOPŒIAL VEGETABLE DRUGS.

action of the heart, was indicated through its native employment as an ordeal poison.

PHYTOLACCA

Poke root, *Phytolacca decandra*, is a handsome plant found throughout the temperate regions of North America, east of the Mississippi River, thriving in rich bottom lands, fence corners, and woody pastures. The American Indians used it, powdered to a pulp, as a poultice. The early American settlers applied it in like manner as a poultice to inflammatory conditions of the cow's udder, in the disease known as garget, a circumstance which has given to the plant one of its common names, *garget plant*. *Phytolacca* crept thence into more extensive use in domestic medicine, a tincture of the same being next employed. Following this came its introduction into the "licensed" profession. In domestic medication the drug was employed from the date of the early settlers, and in the practice of Eclecticism it has ever been a valued remedy. To cite American references to this drug would be to name all the publications of the liberal authors connected with medicines.

PILOCARPUS

Pilocarpus jaborandi is a shrub native to Eastern Brazil, where Piso (511), of Holland, 1643, first mentions its use as a modifier of the infusion of ipecac. Plumier, 1693, also (515) refers to the mixture, describing two varieties of *jaborandi*. Its conspicuous introduction to medicine occurred in 1874, when Dr. Coutinho (170), of Pernambuco, from observing its native uses, made its qualities as a sialogogue known to the medical world. The plant has been cultivated in European greenhouses since the middle of the last century, but no "scientific" observer gave it the honor of a thought in therapeutic directions.

PIMENTA

Allspice (*Pimenta officinalis*) is the berry of a tree native to Jamaica and other West India islands, where it was found in use as a spice by the explorers in the days of the enthusiasm of the new world discovery. It was probably this substance that Garret, a druggist of London, 1601, gave to Clusius (153), who described it in his *Liber Exoticorum*. According to Parkinson's (492) *Theatrum Botanicum*, 1567, it was imported into England soon after the beginning of that century, under the name *round cardamom*. It has received many different names in its passage through various countries. Its chief use is as a spice, but a distilled water made therefrom has also been employed.

PIPER

Black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) is a perennial, climbing shrub native to the forests of Malabar and Travancore, whence it was introduced to other tropical countries, such as Sumatra, the Philippines, West Indies, and the Malay Peninsula. It has been used as a spice

PHARMACOPŒIAL VEGETABLE DRUGS.

and as a stomachic remedy by the natives of the afore-named and other countries since the date of the discovery of the remedy, and probably from all time preceding. Pepper was mentioned by Theophrastus (633), who described two kinds. Dioscorides (194) and Pliny (514) both give it a place in their writings. As early as 64 A. D. it was mentioned as occurring on the Malabar Coast. The Romans at Alexandria, A. D. 176, levied on it a duty. The Arabian authors of the Middle Ages, twelfth and fourteenth centuries, described it fairly. In the European countries of the Middle Ages pepper was considered the most important of all spices, being the foundation of much of the wealth of Venice and Genoa during their greatest commercial activity. It has been used as a medium of exchange when money was scarce, and when Rome was besieged by the Goths the ransom included three thousand pounds of pepper. In fact the value placed upon pepper in the records of the past is in itself an indication of its importance to the people who used it.

PODOPHYLLUM

This handsome plant, *Podophyllum peltatum*, known also as mandrake, or may apple, is one of the most attractive features of the early spring in North America, resisting with remarkable efficiency the aggressive inroads of the agriculturist. It was used by the North American Indians, the Cherokees employing the fresh juice of the root for deafness, and the Wyandottes made a drastic cathartic, from which the drug's harsher qualities were removed by roasting. The once celebrated "Indian doctors," Peter Smith (605) and others, employed the root as an escharotic, in which direction it came into early veterinary practice. The early American physicians and writers on medicine praised its qualities as a purgative, its active cathartic nature having been known, as has been said, from the days of the Indians. The vegetable substitute for the once popular antimonial plaster used so freely by "Regular" physicians was the Compound Tar Plaster of the Eclectics. This contained podophyllum, phytolacca, and sanguinaria.

PRUNUM

The cultivated varieties of the prune tree (*prunus* or prunes) are believed to descend from a wild prune native to Greece, the shores of the Black Sea, and the Caucasus, reaching even into Persia. Pliny (514) records the fact that one of the numerous varieties of the plum tree known in his day afforded a laxative fruit. The pulp of the prune has been used in domestic medicine as well as by the medical profession, paralleling (or following) the efforts of those concerned in early medication. The pulp of the French prune was an ingredient of the once celebrated *Lenitive Electuary*. History does not record the beginning of the use of this fruit in the confections formerly so popular in domestic medicine.

PHARMACOPCEIAL VEGETABLE DRUGS.

PRUNUS VIRGINIANA

The *Prunus virginiana* (*wild black cherry*), found throughout the eastern parts of the United States, has been widely used in domestic medicine since the days of the Indian, being perhaps more highly valued in this direction than by members of the profession, although it has been recognized in the Pharmacopeia since the first edition of this work, 1820. No more popular bark of a native tree, excepting sassafras, is known to home medication. It has a place in all works on early American domestic medication.

PYRETHRUM

Pellitory, or Spanish chamomile (*Anacyclus pyrethrum*), is a widely-distributed plant known in different countries under different names. According to Pliny (514) it was the herb used by the Magians under the name *parthenium* against intermittent fevers, and according to Dioscorides (194) it is the plant that, under the name *anthesis*, was used in the same manner. It is mentioned in the "Arabian Nights" (88) under the name *ukhowan*. It is found throughout European Turkey, and according to Forskal southward to the mountains of Yemen, where it is called *maniat*. According to De Candolle (122) its introduction into Britain was perhaps before the coming of the Romans. The European colonists carried it, according to Josselyn (345) to Northeast America before 1669, where it is to be found both under cultivation and, having escaped therefrom, as a wild plant. Once a popular remedy in agues, its use is now practically discontinued, even in domestic medicine. Physicians as a rule neglect it, but it is employed by them in a few exceptional instances.

QUASSIA

Quassia amara takes its name from a slave of Surinam, named Quassi (see article *Quassia Amara*, J. U. Lloyd, *Western Druggist*, Chicago, Jan., 1897), who used the plant as a secret remedy, with great success, in the treatment of malignant fevers common to his locality and climate. Daniel Rolander, a Swede, became interested in the drug, and "in consequence of a valuable consideration" purchased from the slave Quassi a knowledge of the drug composing his remedy. Rolander returned to Stockholm in 1756, when he introduced the drug to Europe. In 1760 (or according to another reference, 1761) Carol. Gust. Dahlberg, an officer of the Dutch army and an eminent botanist, a pupil of Linnæus (385), returned to Sweden from Surinam, where he too had become acquainted with the slave Quassi, and through kindness to him had so gained his affection that he revealed not only the composition of his secret remedy, but even showed to him the tree from which the drug was derived. Dahlberg procured specimens of the root, flowers, and leaves of the tree, preserving them in alcohol, and presented them to Linnæus, who named the wood *Lignum quassia*, in honor of the slave, and established a new genus for the plant, which