

likewise given it in substance and in other forms, and still without any degree of this operation. I have superintended experiments with it, made by young men, and always with the same results.

I have known four or five tobacco-pipesful of it smoked in immediate succession, and without any narcosis; and I have also known it given by enema, and with the same result. In addition to this, no species of the genus *lobelia*, nor of the order *lobeliaee*, is known to possess a particle of narcotic power. Dr. Bigelow, of Boston, was the first who ascribed narcotic powers to this agent; and this he first did in 1817, and not from his own observations, but from the general fact in connexion with its nauseating and emetic operation, it sometimes produces vertigo and nervous tremours: and that when it nauseates powerfully without vomiting, and when it vomits excessively, it produces considerable prostration. After Dr. Bigelow first pronounced it narcotic, subsequent writers very speedily converted 'something as black as a crow into three black crows;' and Dr. Ansel U. Ives, of New-York, at last pronounced *lobelia inflata* to be a 'deadly narcotic,' and that its action as an emetic 'is secondary, or symptomatic of the primary impression upon the brain, like that caused by tobacco and other narcotic poisons.' But all this is mere stuff and closet speculation, and does not contain a single truth. There is no probability that Dr. Ansel U. Ives ever used the article in his life.

The symptoms from which Dr. Bigelow inferred its narcotic power, are produced by the tartrate of antimony and potasso, and quite as often by *ipecacuanha*, as by *lobelia inflata*; and I have not only witnessed them from seasickness and sick-headache, but I have very often experienced them in my own person from these two affections.

As to the cathartic power of this article, I have the same ground for a negative decision, as in regard to its narcotic power, with one exception only, viz. some other species of the genus are unquestionably cathartic. I have never been able to produce a laxative or even *ecoproptic*

effect with it; but I have occasionally (though not often) known it prove *coprostatic* [costive.]

As an emetic, I am satisfied that it is as kind and as destitute of all hazard, as the officinal *ipecacuanha*, though perhaps it may be somewhat more efficient; I have occasionally known it produce powerful nausea without vomiting, and with considerable prostration; but not by any means as often as I have known *ipecacuanha* do this. I have a considerable number of professional friends who use it more than any other emetic, and, on the whole, consider it one of the very best agents of this class in the whole materia medica, for a large number of cases of frequent occurrence.

But *lobelia inflata* possesses another power of much more value than its emetic power, and of much more value than would be in its narcotic power, if it possessed any. There is not, however, space in this sheet to treat of it; I can only say, that it is the exertion of this power, when *lobelia inflata* is used as an emetic, that gives it a superiority over all the emetics in common use, for the treatment of certain diseases.

The officinal tincture, carefully prepared, is the pharmacetic form which I prefer. As an emetic, a tablespoonful is a medium dose for an adult of ordinary susceptibility. This quantity, however, will frequently fail of operating, if the patient is quietly in bed, in which case, it may be necessary to repeat this dose after an interim of 15 minutes. If the patient is up, and moving about, a tablespoonful will usually vomit in ordinary cases. But there are instances in which a dessert-spoonful is a sufficient emetic dose.

I am confident (the old women's stories in the books to the contrary notwithstanding,) that *lobelia inflata* is a valuable, a safe, and a sufficiently gentle article of medicine; and I think the time will come, when it will be much better appreciated. Little, however, of its value can be specified within the compass of a single sheet of paper.

Be pleased to excuse the hurry and seeming carelessness of the preceding, for which I must