

RHAMNUS PURSHIANA.

The re-appearance of reports on this drug, which a few years ago excited such a considerable degree of professional attention, has characterized the periodical literature of the latter months of 1883. The cause of this renewed attention to this drug on the part of medical writers is more directly traceable to the interest which it has excited during the past year in Great Britain. The *British Medical Journal* has contained a number of very flattering reports on its efficacy, and the other journals have contained similar reports. The drug seems to have obtained a very strong foothold among our conservative brethren of the British Isles, and judging from the reports which have been given of its action in their hands, it is fulfilling the requirements of a tonic-laxative in that country.

The *Therapeutic Gazette*, for December, contains a symposium on cascara sagrada, from which we select some facts which do not seem to have been very generally familiar. Dr. C. W. Tange-man, of the Medical College of Ohio, has subjected it to a series of physiological experiments, the results of which he contributes as follows :

1st. Cascara sagrada, when given in small doses (fifteen to twenty drops), acts like a vegetable bitter on the stomach ; it increases the flow of gastric juice, stimulates the peptic glands to increased action, thereby bringing about healthy gastric digestion.

2nd. It acts on the sympathetic nervous system, sending an increased blood supply to the intestines.

3rd. It increases to a limited extent peristaltic action of the small bowels, but increases it very much in the colon, and especially in the rectum.

4th. It has a specific action on the rectum in the way of peristalsis, to cause this portion of the bowel to unload itself.

5th. It does not affect the passage of the food in the small intestines any more than a bitter tonic would.

6th. It is not a safe remedy in pregnancy or uterine disorders, especially when given in cathartic doses.

7th. It does not affect the larger glandular organs, liver, pancreas or spleen, even when given in cathartic doses.

8th. Hypodermically the remedy will never produce the permanent good results in chronic constipation that are obtained when it is given by the mouth.

9th. When employed subcutaneously it acts simply as an evacuant to the rectum.

10th. The same quantity given hypodermically that produces marked effects when administered by the mouth, will not have the same effect clinically or physiologically.

Dr. T. L. Wright, of Bellefontaine, O., discusses the peculiar applicability of cascara cordial, of which rhamnus purshiana is the base, in the treatment of the constipation of elderly persons. In this class of cases many of the symptoms which

are usually associated by physical decay are directly traceable to constipation, and Dr. Wright has found that cascara cordial, through its tonic-laxative properties, removes this condition, greatly to the improvement of the person's spirits.

Dr. F. C. Herr, physician to the South-Western hospital of Philadelphia, after extolling the value of cascara cordial in dyspeptic disorders, speaks very highly of the preparation as a vehicle for the administration of the more unpalatable drugs. He regards the encroachments of homœopathy upon regular medicine as largely due to the persistent refusal of the old school of practitioners, so-called, to accede to the demands of a sick public for palatable medicines. He has found in cascara cordial a vehicle which at once succeeds in disguising the taste of many disagreeable drugs, and at the same time meets the indication so commonly present for an easy and agreeable laxative. In discussing its applicability in the treatment of young children he has found in this cordial a preparation which is calculated to supplement to a very large degree the "carminative bottle," which has been in so much demand among young children. These baby-mixtures are too often unsafe and should be given with a spare hand, and if cascara cordial shall be found on future trial to verify Dr. Herr's claim for it, it will indeed prove to be a very valuable addition to the physician's armamentarium.

CORROSIVE SUBLIMATE IN GONORRHOEA.

Dr. Joseph McChesney, of Deming, New Mexico, contributes to the *Therapeutic Gazette*, for December, a report of a series of seven cases of gonorrhœa in which he employed by a way of treatment, only a solution of corrosive sublimate, one grain to six ounces of water. The results are already very surprising. In several of these cases this injection was resorted to after a long and unsuccessful course with the ordinary remedies in such cases, and the result was uniform success. He resorts to these injections, which he gives once every four hours, after the subsidence of the acute stage. He is very confident that, properly applied, this solution will effect a cure of the gonorrhœa within from eight to ten days after it has been resorted to.

VESICATION IN DIPHTHERIA.

D. W. F. Bartlett, of Buffalo, New York, communicates to the *Therapeutic Gazette*, for December, the results of his experience in the use of cantharidal blisters in diphtheria. His plan is to apply the blister immediately on the appearance of the exudate in the throat. The theory is that the materies morbi is eliminated through the blistered surface, while the counter-irritation thus caused relieves also the engorged pharyngeal surfaces. He regards the exudate in the throat as