

fourth edition of *Wood and Bache's Dispensatory*, page 1137, under the title of *Collinsonia, Canadensis*, and vulgarly known by names similar to those applied to the Kentucky plant.

I was induced to make a trial of this plant in mercurial salivation, from the fact that this plant, when given to a horse affected with a disease called slabbering, effects a complete cure of the disease in a few hours.

This salivation, or slabbering disease in the horse, doubtless proceeds from some diseased condition of the salivary glands. About two years ago, passing a field where the plant was abundant, its effect on the salivated horse occurred to my mind, and, immediately, a question suggested itself—that, if this remedy can exert so speedy, and such surprising effects, on the salivary glands of the horse, may it not possess properties that would render it useful and beneficial in salivation in the human subject? Under this impression, I resolved on a trial of its powers, in the first case that should present itself. The trial convinced me that it possessed powers for relieving and curing mercurial salivation, greatly surpassing any means I had hitherto used, and subsequent experience has firmly established that conviction.

The effects produced by the local application of the infusion in the human subject, induces me to think that the effect it produces on the horse does not arise from the plant taken into the stomach, and reaching the diseased glands, through the medium of the circulation, but that the direct application of the juice of the plant, while the horse is chewing it, effects the cure. It has so happened, that all the cases in which I have had occasion to use the remedy, have occurred during the spring, summer, or fall, when the plants are in a green state. I have the dried leaves, but have never used them; whether the leaves lose any of their virtues by drying, I am unable to say. I have never heard of the plant being used in any shape, as a medicine, until I tried it as a remedy for salivation.

[Dr. Robertson was polite enough to send us, with the above communication, some dried specimens of the above plant, which we submitted to our friend, Dr. R. E. Griffith, an able botanist, from whom we have received the following note:—

Dr. Hays:—Dear Sir.—The plant you left with me appears to be *Ambrosia Trifida*, though, from the absence of flowers or fruits, it is difficult to decide with absolute certainty; at the same time, the characters of the leaves and stem are so striking, as to leave little doubt on the subject.

Torrey and Gray (*Flor. Nor. Amer.*, ii. 290) describes it as follows:—"Stem tall and stout, hairy, rough; leaves scabrous and hairy, deeply three-lobed; the lobes oval, lanceolate, acuminate, serrate; the lower leaves often five-lobed; petioles narrowly winged, ciliate, racemes often paniculate; fruit (fertile involucre) turbinate-obovoid, with a short conical pointed apex, six-ribbed, the ribs terminating in as many cristate tubercles.

"Low grounds, and along streams, Canada to Georgia, and west to Louisiana and Arkansas. Aug.—Sept. annual."

It is also noticed by Riddell (*Synop. Flor. West. States*. No. 1014) as every where abundant: he gives the vulgar name of bitter-weed to it. Rafinesque (*Med. Flor.*, ii. 190) speaks of it, and says that it is called horse-weed, one of the names given by Dr. Robertson, and states that the species of *Ambrosia* are antiseptic.

The *A. Trifida* has not, as far as I can ascertain, been employed as a remedial agent, though some of the other species have been used, with some success as febrifuges. Should the present plant, on a more extended trial, be found to be as successful, in cases of mercurial salivation as is shown by Dr. Robertson, it will be a very important addition to the *materia medica*. It is to be found in abundance in the

vicinity of Philadelphia. It is probable that the *A. Elatior*, or rag-weed, so common in all our fields, would prove still more efficacious, as its sensible properties are much more developed than in the present plant.

Yours, &c., R. E. GRIFFITH, M. D.]

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ON THE CURE OF ERUPTIONS ON THE HEAD AND FACE IN CHILDREN.

M. Trousseau makes some interesting remarks, in his *Journal de Medecine*, upon the rules that should guide the practitioner in endeavouring to heal the eruptions, sores, &c., which affect the head and face of young children. To avoid circumlocution, we will employ, in the extracts we make from the paper, the term by which these are designated in France—*les gourmes*—equivalent to our appellation "breakings-out."

It is a popular opinion that danger attends the attempt to heal these, and this is sometimes true when their manifestation is connected with a morbid diathesis. Others, however, unconnected with this, do much mischief, and should be healed at once. A diathesis may be acquired or congenital; and the *suppurative diathesis* is that which of all others is most evidently acquired. The "*gourmes*" are, indeed, generally one of the manifestations of this; while in other cases the *dartrous diathesis*, which is usually hereditary, plays an important part in generating the eruption. The form of the "*gourmes*" will vary, according as one or other of these prevail. Impetigo, ecchyma, impetiginous eczema, intertrigo, furunculus, superficial phlegmon, and ophthalmia, are more especially connected with the *suppurative diathesis*; while lichen, psoriasis, eczema rubrum, pityriasis favus, and chronic inflammation of the eyelid, are more often dependant upon the *dartrous diathesis*.

1. When, from distress, neglect, or other cause, a superficial phlegmasia becomes, in the course of several months, converted into a suppurating sore, in the groin, behind the ears, or upon the scalp of the child, the economy, which at first suffered from the presence of an useless discharge, accustoms itself to it to such an extent, that, although its suppression at an early period would have been very advantageous, this must now be accomplished cautiously, or disease and ill health will result. 2. Again, when an impetigo suddenly develops itself in a child previously in ill health, and becomes chronic, the health may become manifestly improved, as long as the eruption continues. It is evident that, for a certain period, at least, it should not be meddled with, and even then that its cure should be very cautiously undertaken. 3. The development of the "*gourmes*" may be the signal of serious disorders in a child prior to this in good health. In this case their cure, if fever be present, should be set about at once, without any fear of the pretended effects of a retrocession. 4. When a child's health is good, we must endeavour by every means to prevent the establishment of the "*gourmes*," for, if suppuration be accidentally established, it may give rise to other suppurations—in fact, generate a suppurative diathesis. This diathesis, again, may manifest itself, not only on the skin and mucous membranes, but also in the internal organs; and thus, in children suffering from "*gourmes*," variola, rubeola, scarlatina, &c., are always more fatal. 5. When the "*gourmes*" invade important parts, as the eyes, nasal fosse, auditory canal, &c., we must use every means to prevent their extension.

Treatment.—The superficial excoriations which are found behind the ears and between the folds of the skin in young children, usually arise from negligence, and often disappear upon the mere observance of cleanliness. Soapy baths, dusting them with lycopodium, or the interposition of lint