

in the form of infusions. Very little is known about the salts, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the officer could persuade a patient to take Epsom salts, in consequence of a deep-rooted superstition that the magnesium sulphate will produce inflammation of the bowels. Pills, no matter how strong, are swallowed *ad libitum*. *Podophyllum peltatum*, or mandrake, is taken in doses of twenty grains. *Carui fructus*, or the common caraway, is indigenous to this country and is the common remedy for colic, a complaint perhaps more frequent and more stubborn than with us.

Another indigenous plant, and one which grows in that latitude in great profusion, is the caulophyllum, or the blue cohosh, also known by the name of papoose root, squaw root, or blueberry root. It is used very largely in obstetrics and all female complaints. In doses of thirty to sixty grains the powdered rhizome is given to produce abortion, but the Crees have a powder which they mix with the cohosh, and when thus administered Mr. Strath has known more than one instance where a three-months' foetus has been expelled from the uterus without ensuing danger to the mother. He even goes so far as to say that abortion procured in this manner precludes all possibility of future conception. This powder they never allowed Mr. Strath to see, and in spite of his offer of \$50 for a small sample, the secret has been kept profoundly sacred. Menstruation at the age of eleven years is the rule, and he considers it a remarkable fact in a cold country, where the thermometer often registers fifty degrees below zero.

Ladies' slipper, the *cypripedium* of the Pharmacopœia, imported from the tribes to the south, is chiefly used in rheumatism in very large doses. It is also used in the treatment of epilepsy, but this disease is of a rare occurrence.

As an aromatic stimulant hedeoma, or pennyroyal, is as much used by the Cree women, and in a similar manner, as by our own people.

Plantago, or Plantain, is used commonly as a hemostatic, and is chewed by the doctor and applied as a paste to the bleeding surface. This drug is also their remedy for toothache. It is not put in the aching tooth, but is swallowed. Some of you will be surprised to hear that the Indians suffer very much from their teeth, and that my informant has practised a great deal of dentistry during his residence with them.

Juniper is used in three forms. The berries are stewed and eaten as a diuretic. The leaves are dried and dusted over indolent sores, healing them with wonderful rapidity, and the root infused is administered in case of gravel. Though Bright's disease is rare, gravel is very common, and most of the old men die of it. Hydrangea is used with juniper and with great success.

Spearmint, sarsaparilla, and dandelion are taken for the same complaints as we ourselves take them.

Hemlock spruce is much thought of. The inner bark of the tree, freshly peeled, is mixed with equal parts of Poplar and Black Birch to make a decoction. In the process of boiling, an oil is taken from the surface. This oil is mixed in the proportion of two drams to a quart of water, which quantity is drunk in the course of two or three days, as an abortive medicine.

We must no longer pride ourselves on the nursery toilet powders which we present to our customers in such a variety of charming packages. To the Indian, whose untutored mind, as Pope says, sees God in clouds and hears Him in the wind, must we go for the most agreeable and most absorbent article of the kind yet introduced, a sample of which I have with me. It is nothing but the rotten interior of the hemlock spruce, lacking perhaps the extreme fineness which could only be obtained by modern methods and machinery.

We now come to willow bark, which is used as a hemostatic in the form of an infusion. It is the belief of the Indian that bleeding should be arrested at once. He has an awful fear of death from loss of blood, and an Indian has been seen to faint whilst watching another having his finger amputated.

Regarding salicin, "the important constituent of willow bark," the Cree is incredulous as to its source. He cannot understand how a white powder can be made from a bark, and it is entirely without faith that he is occasionally induced to take this remedy or the salicylates for rheumatism.

The belief that fever can only be cured by vomiting it up has a strong hold on the Cree mind, and he therefore swallows the strongest remedies by taking what we would consider more than a maximum dose of *veratrum viride*, or the green hellebore of the pharmacopœia, but this powerful drug has another use, the story of which will, to say the least, be news to some of the gentlemen present. The rootlets and the rhizome are powdered between two stones, and as such taken as snuff to reduce hernia. The *modus operandi* is thus: The patient, naked, of course, is elevated to a horizontal position. He then takes a good pinch of the snuff and during the violent sneezing which follows, a companion standing ready at the side, plunges back the rupture with his fist, and if it is not a case of strangulation, the treatment is sufficient. To undo matters, so to speak, the patient is advised to eat all the pork he can. Mr. Strath is of the opinion that hernia is common with the tribe in consequence of the abundance of grease consumed by them, and he ventured to say that eight out of ten Crees are ruptured.

Skin diseases of all kinds are there, and are treated with an ointment made of equal quantities of gunpowder and lard.

Sturgeon oil is used in the place of cod liver oil and is clarified till it becomes the color of tincture of capsicum. In one ounce doses, which are considered large, it acts as a cathartic.

An infusion of wild raspberry leaves combined with willow bark is an excellent remedy for cholera infantum, if properly administered, but there are a great many deaths from diarrhœa. In that latitude and in all degrees north of 54, a very large raspberry grows which is called the "headberry" by the Indians; its botanical name is *rubus arcticus*. The berry is found at the head of the stem, two feet in height.

Rumex, or yellow dock, is well known and used extensively as a laxative and for poultices. In any critical case of illness, the medicine man of the tribe is called and is required to say whether or not the patient will recover. This skillful *takir* has a powder resembling pulverized rhei in appearance. This he places on the surface of a saucerful of water. The powder in a moment or two spreads out into rays either to the east or to the west. If to the former point of the compass, the victim will die; if to the latter, which invariably happens, recovery is promised. It is quite likely that a promise of such a nature materially helps the patient by buoying him up, and by inspiring him with hope. So much for one feature of Indian superstition.

Indian revenge, or rather that of the Northern Crees in particular, is, if true, of the most shocking character. It is said if a Cree wishes to punish another severely, he does so by disfiguring him for life, by introducing an almost tasteless compound into his tea or tobacco—generally into his tea which he drinks strong and in great quantities. This vile compound is made up of 27 vegetable and animal drugs. The victim feels no ill effects at the time of taking it, but in the course of two or three months the skin begins to peel, a rash breaks out and spreads over the entire body. Subsequently the skin gradually darkens to black, and on the exposed parts hair grows so thickly as to give the unhappy Indian the appearance of a baboon. He never recovers. There is no romance about this, I am assured, for there are at least half a dozen cases of the kind to be found in the country at this day.

Their most fatal poison is the wild carrot. These Indians have a fashion of boasting among themselves of their ability of poisoning enemies at various distances. Just imagine an Indian polishing off an enemy at a distance of five miles by a wild carrot!

Guathol.—Pyrocatechin-ethyl-ether—a substitute for guaiacol, and according to Professor J. von Mering gives more satisfactory results than does the latter.

Quinoform, a name given by De Vry to a precipitate produced by the addition of formalin to an extract of cinchona containing some hydrochloric acid.

Aiodinum (aiodin) is a concentrated iodothyron, containing gramme for gramme, ten times the active constituents of the thyroid gland.