

root of the plant at all resembles any of the forms of that drug I had ever met with in commerce.

What then is the *true Pareira Brava*?—To answer this question we must look back to the early history of the drug.

The merit of having first given some account of *Pareira Brava* is usually conceded to the Dutch traveller Piso, who in his work *De Medicina Brasiliensi*, published in 1648, described a plant called by the Portuguese *Caapeba*, *Cipó de Cobras* or *Herva de Nossa Senhora*. Piso's figure is scarcely recognizable, but his description of fruit as resembling the catkins of hop (*semen magnum coloris rosacei, e capsulis lupulo similibus prominens*) applies well enough to a *Cissampelos*, and in fact *C. glaberrima* St. Hil. is known under these Portuguese names in Southern Brazil at the present time. My friend Mr. J. Correa de Mello, of Campinas, Prov. S. Paulo, has been good enough to send me a specimen of this plant and its root; and the latter I find to be wholly unlike any sort of *Pareira Brava*.

That Piso does not mention *Pareira Brava* was indeed remarked as long ago as 1710 *; and it is only since the drug has been supposed to be derived from *Cissampelos* that authors have identified it with Piso's *Caapeba*.

Pareira Brava was certainly first brought to Europe by the Portuguese. It first attracted general attention in 1688, when Michel Amelot, Marquis de Gournay, a privy councillor of Louis XIV., and a very distinguished political personage, brought it with him from Lisbon, whither he had been sent as ambassador by the French king. There can be no doubt that the drug was considered to possess extraordinary properties. Rouillé, the successor of Amelot in the Lisbon embassy, also took home with him to Paris some *Pareira Brava*; and in 1710 we find it claiming the notice of the French Academy,† who requested Etienne-François Geoffroy, Professor of Medicine and Pharmacy in the College of France, to investigate its virtues. Jean-Claude-Adrien Helvetius, a physician of great merit, who though a young man was consulted by Louis XIV. in his last days, and was afterwards attached to the court of Louis XV., tried the drug still earlier,‡ and gave strong testimony in its favour.

Both Geoffroy and Helvetius were correspondents of Sir Hans Sloane, that dilligent promoter of science whose immense collections gave origin to the British Museum,—and among the Sloanian MSS. I have found a letter of Helvetius§ addressed in 1715 to Monsieur

* *Hist. de l' Acad. Royale des Sciences*, année 1710, 56.

† *Hist. de l' Acad. Royale des Sciences*, année 1710, 56.

‡ Helvetius, *Traite des Maladies les plus frequentes et des remedes specifiques pour les guerir*, Paris, 1703, 98.

§ Sloane MS. No. 3340, p. 291.—The letter has already been published in *Phil. Trans.* No. 346, Nov. and Dec., 1715, p. 365.