

tion to health. Hypochondriasis.—A White woman, appears to have been caused by the shock she received from a friend of hers, in an adjoining house, committing suicide under appalling circumstances. Sent to her friends for change of scene, &c. Diseased Joints.—Almost always treated by rest, starched bandage, caustic issues, and a firm roller, and some preparation of Iodine internally. Retention of Urine.—Nothing tickles the fancy of both patient and spectator more than the introduction of the catheter. The sight, however, of a large-sized one rather alarms. Hooping Cough.—No note of these cases, as they are generally mild, seldom requiring more than an occasional emetic, and a flannel shirt, if it can be obtained. Neither has the number of deaths been given, as it is impossible to procure a correct one; to give those, therefore, of which I have cognizance, would cause such a ridiculous disproportion between the number of cases of disease and the number of deaths, as to lead to the conclusion, either that the practice adopted was unusually successful, or the cases either not what they are denominated, or uncommonly slight in degree. "I suppose you find very little disease amongst the Indian tribes?" is a question which has been put to me over and over again by highly intelligent men, who appear, oddly enough, to suppose that the absence of every thing which they themselves consider as absolutely necessary to existence—shelter, comfortable clothing, proper and sufficient food, &c.—must ensure to the Indian an immunity from disease and death. From that cause, very few of the human race die of mere old age. Common politeness, or the fear of a broken head, prevent your doubting the sanity of the inquirer, and few men would feel it their duty to suggest to his friends the propriety of a Commission de Lunatico Inquirendo. It is better to assume a moralizing strain, to recall to his recollection that man is born to die, as the sparks fly upward; to point out that in a body of five or six thousand Indians assembled, very, very few old persons are to be seen; to take him to the Indian lodges, in almost every one of which some one has a complaint begun, continuing, or nearly ending; (as is the case in the dwelling of almost every White family in the land,) and to assure him that, before nightfall, you will have ample opportunity of proving that a dead Indian is not nearly as great a rarity as a dead ass is in Europe.

This Return cannot be more appropriately closed than by the following extract from a lately published work:—

"Another source of error is the reputed absence of indigence and disease in savage tribes. But a brief examination will show that this absence is more apparent than real, and that uniformity has been mistaken for perfection. It is generally agreed that indigence consists in the want of some things absolutely necessary for existence. Such a state cannot exist in barbarous life. The savage either lives or dies: he is never precisely rich, or poor: whilst the means of subsistence are afforded, he exists from hand to mouth; when they fail, there is no one from whom he can beg or borrow, and few whom he can plunder. With him destitution is death. It is true he can support hunger, thirst, pain, to a degree we cannot approach; that he can feed on substances from which we shrink with horror. But there are limits to his powers of endurance. When these are passed, he sinks unnoticed and unknown. There is no one to record that a unit has been subtracted from the amount of human existence. The uniformity which travellers and voyagers have discovered in savage life, is a condition but one degree higher than actual starvation. Those who sink below it, disappear instantaneously, and are as if they had never been. For a similar reason, severe diseases are rarely seen by casual visitors of savage tribes. Death is their doctor, and the grave their hospital. Those who have resided among them, testify that diseases are produced by the privations endured at one period, and the repletion in which they indulge when a period of plenty arrives. But unless the cure is rapid, the termination of the disease must be fatal. When patients are left entirely to Nature, it is found that Nature presses very hard for an immediate payment of her debt."

Although the Indians, being without the advantages of science to guide them in their choice of remedies, and treatment of diseases, derive their principles from mere experience, it is certain, that we are indebted to their *Materia Medica* for many valuable articles of a vegetable kind; it is as certain that they are frequently successful in their adaptation of these to complaints of a formidable

character. One of the remedies in great use amongst them is the *Geranium Maculatum*, which many eminent physicians of the United States rank as one of the most powerful vegetable astringents, being principally composed of *tannin* and *gallic acid*. In the second stage of dysentery and diarrhoea, after evacuations; in hemorrhages of the alimentary canal; and as a styptic in external bleedings, it rarely fails of giving relief. Its dose is from gr. x. to ʒss. of the powder, or ʒss. to ʒj. of a decoction made with Rad. Geranii, ʒj, Aquæ ferventis lb. ss. With the Indians it is a favourite external styptic, the dried root being powdered and placed on the mouth of the bleeding vessel. It is also much used by them as a wash in Leucorrhœa. Internally, in doses of half a teaspoonful in cold water, they consider it very efficacious in hæmoptysis, and in this opinion, they are fully sustained by Thacker, Mease, Bigelow, and others.

The *Xanthoxylum Fraxineum*, or Prickly Ash, is one of the most valuable remedies of the Indians for the cure of rheumatism. It is said to resemble guaiacum in its properties, and is much used by the Americans as a remedy in chronic rheumatic complaints, and particularly in cases of a syphilitic taint. Bigelow says he gave the bark of this shrub in doses of ten and twenty grains with great advantage.

An excellent tonic is the *Xanthoriza Apifolia*, its composition being principally *resin* and *gum*, and the taste intensely bitter. The dose is ʒij. of the powdered root. The Indians administer it as a diuretic in dropsy, and also use a cold watery infusion for sore eyes.

A favourite and well known remedy with the Aborigines is the *Eupatorium Perfoliatum*, having the familiar names in the United States, of Boneset, Crowwort, Thoroughwort, &c. Its taste is intensely bitter, with a slight astringency, but no acrimony, and its operation is tonic, sudorific, cathartic: according to the mode of its exhibition. It is given in cold infusion in intermittents, continued fevers, and inflammatory diseases, to produce vomiting and catharsis in hot infusion, and as a tonic in substance. In the United States Pharmacopœia, there is an official formula *Infusum Eupatorii*. The natives administer it with good effect in fever, and as a common drink in acute rheumatism, pouring a quart of boiling water on two drachms of the leaves, and drinking about three ounces three times in the day.

The *Cornus Florida*, Dog wood, is said to differ little in its chemical composition from the Peruvian Bark, and Dr. John Walker states, that of all the indigenous tonics, this is the most beneficial in intermittents. Thirty-five grains of Dog Wood Bark are said to be equal to thirty grains of cinchona. The Indians use a decoction of small branches and buds, in want of appetite, and debility of the stomach. It is valued also as a poultice to correct ill-conditioned sores.