

Charmed by the beauty of the scenery—
The placid stillness of the lakelet's breast,—
She gazed upon it long and dreamily,
At length she thought she'd seek the bower
and rest.

Each step she mounted, backward looks she
cast
From thence, another point of view to take;
When suddenly a gust of wind swept past,
Caught up her fan, and hurled it in the lake.

Loudly she called her maid, but no one
came.
Finding at length she could not make her
hear,
She thought, "why need I feel false pride
or shame?
"I'll fetch the fan myself; there's no one
near."

No sooner had the girl the thought ex-
pressed,
Than down the steps again she lightly ran;
Looked coyly round, then partially undressed,
Bent on obtaining back the truant fan.

She paused awhile, then, slowly turning
round,
Her face and form became suffused with red;
Her eyes, in modesty, had sought the
ground,
But rested on the lake's clear face instead.

And there she saw—as if 'twere sculpt' of
stone—
A half clothed form, a living statuette;

A fair young face,—she recognised her own,
And blushed a crimson when her own eyes
met.

She gazed admiringly, yet bashfully,
As if she felt an innate sense of shame;
She *knew* she blushed, for she could plainly see
The rosy blood rush mantling through her
frame.

As thus she stood, she chanced to raise her
eyes,
'Ere stepping in the lake to get the fan;
But who can paint her horror and surprise,
When *her* eyes met the dark eyes of a man?

Yes, there, beneath the lofty palm tree's
shade,
There stood a lad, good-looking, tall and
slim,
Intently gazing on the beautious maid.
Her gaze in turn became transfixed on him.

The girl, with mingled modesty and fear,
Arrayed herself in haste as best she could;
She dared not look, she *felt* him drawing near.
'Ere she was clothed, the young man by her
stood.

A man to see her *thus*, she was dismayed,
And could have sunk into the ground with
fright;
Abashed, confused, perplexed, she yet dis-
played

Some anger too, as well indeed she might.

GEO. C. SEENT.

(To be Continued.)

REPORT OF M. GUBLER UPON THE MATERIA MEDICA OF THE CHINESE.

READ BEFORE THE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE at the sitting of the 19th November 1873.

GENTLEMEN,—On the 16th of July last
two Savants submitted to your appreciation
a work the title of which, though simple,

was of such ample promise as to vividly
excite our curiosity. This work was entitled
Etudes sur la matière médicale des Chinois,

by M. Dabry de Thiersant, Consul for France in China, and Dr. Leon Soubeiran, honorably known by his scientific books and who bears a name dear to science.

These authors have thus contributed in common the fruits of their investigations and combined their efforts to make better known the therapeutic agents, and, indirectly, the medical ideas of a nation still holding an elevated position in civilization; but at present stationary after surpassing all others in industry, science and arts. And although in a more advanced civilization such notions and remedies may be considered those of empires, yet it cannot be denied that the acquisition of such knowledge is of importance to the progress and welfare of western nations.

It is not, however, the first time, we may remember, that such an enterprise has tempted the zeal of medical men and naturalists. This sort of literature in particular has been enriched, especially during the last few years, by very valuable works among which we may note those of M. M. Tatarinov, Porter Smith, O. Debeaux and in particular that by Mr Daniel Hanbury. But however valuable these works may be, they are not and cannot be more than essays, more or less successful or advanced by reason of the particular difficulties inherent in researches of this nature.

In fact, the medicaments used in the Chinese Empire are almost always in the state of mixtures changed or adulterated by successive decoctions into different liquids, and reduced, if not into powder, yet into particles so small that they can only be analyzed with great difficulty. The scientific determination and value of the greater part of these therapeutic agents would have therefore been impossible for the authors of this treatise, had they not been benefitted by the researches of their predecessors, in addition to the personal knowledge acquired by one of them on the spot. Thanks to the conjunction of these two conditions of success and to the combined labors of M. M.

Leon Soubeiran and Dabry de Thiersant we are to-day sufficiently informed to enable us to lay before the public with some precision the therapeutic art of the Chinese.

In their exposition our two countrymen have adopted the natural system of classification. The productions of the *Materia Medica* are divided into mineral, animal and vegetable; the two last groups being subdivided into families. Each substance is designated by its vulgar Chinese name and by its corresponding scientific denomination. Following this is given information relative to their qualities, uses and the modes of application. In order to establish identities and determine synonyms, the authors were obliged, of course, to minutely compare different productions and to make bibliographical researches which are always difficult and very laborious owing to the obscurity of the texts.

When you at first, turn to survey this vast scene, you are impressed—in its general aspect and also in a great number of details—with the reproduction of characteristic features to which we are accustomed in the *Materia Medica* of Europe. You find with astonishment among them the greatest part of the substances used by ourselves, and you recognize also with surprise a similitude of indications and in some degree an analogy of theoretical ideas concerning the use of them.

When you read the book of M. M. Leon Soubeiran and Dabry de Thiersant you might believe that it was the *Materia Medica* of Geoffroy or one of those old treatises in which a dawning and doubtful science has accepted without disdain—notwithstanding its observations or its prejudices—the errors of the quacks of the time and the attendant popular superstitions.

No person will be surprised to learn that the idea of specifics, correlative with that of ontology, appears to have ruled the medical practice of China in the same way as it formerly did that of Europe. Such a substance is endowed with a virtue essentially anti-

rheumatic or anti-spasmodic; such another has the inexplicable power, irreducible to other properties the most simple, to cure directly, *proprio motu*, phthisis, syphilis or hydrophobia.

Besides this, the Chinese are persuaded, as Europeans were in the middle ages, that Providence, little confiding in our instinctive faculties, has endowed our intelligence in order that we may distinguish what is noxious from what is useful. According to this conception nature should have taken care to stigmatise the poisons and decorate remedies with insignia, recalling immediately to man the services he has the right to expect. This is called the *doctrine of the signatures*. And the belief in this singular dogma becomes constantly apparent in the *Materia Medica* of the Chinese.

Thus, the *Luciole* is recommended as a cure for sore eyes; the madder (*Rubia Munjista*), whose root is red, is reputed provocative of the flow of the menses; the *Polygonium tinctorium*, which is a species of Indigo plant, is reputed efficacious against petechial fevers; the reniform fruit of the *Kadsura Chinensis* has aphrodisiac properties, and *Ginseng*, whose bifurcated root is like the leg of a man, has the property of restoring to invalids and old men their lost strength and virility.

Some considerations of the same sort have brought into repute, without doubt, the *Cordiceps Chinensis* as exciting the genitals; the *Bidens parviflora* as an infallible means of causing the growth of the nails; or the *Vitex incisa* as having the power of increasing the beard; finally, that of the *Apocynum juventus* as a medicament of youth. And if the horns of stags are exposed in China on such elegant shops, and if they are brought into such great fashion by palled and feeble men, is it not because this beautiful animal owes this distinction to its courage and its generous ardour at certain periods of the year?

Verily, we behold strange illusions; but they deserve indulgence, especially on

the part of those whose ancestors have participated in them. When it was formerly believed that *Lungwort* was a cure for phthisis, that *Stone crop* or *Orpine* expelled the gravel, and that the carrot dissipated the jaundice, modesty is a virtue indispensable to all.

Otherwise, in other points, the Chinese show true practical sense and also scientific tendencies which are as praiseworthy as some of their errors are excusable. For example, we may remark that in their *Materia Medica* the astringent substances, either vegetables (Galls, &c., &c.) or Minerals (Alum, Acetate and Sulphate of Iron, Sugar of Lead, Nitrate of silver &c.) serve the same as Bitters, which are tonic, astringent and febrifuge,—*Salix babylonica*, *Populus tremula*, *Dichroa febrifuga*), and stop sweat, a tonic diarrhea, and spermatorrhea.

In the same manner the aromatics, the essential Oils, simple or sulphuretted; the balsamics, used as diffusible stimulants, febrifuges, as antispasmodics and to moderate catarrhs.

Such are the medicaments furnished by the Labiates, the umbelliferous plants and the aromatic compound flowers, the *Myrsiticies* and the odoriferous resin of storax, garlic, sandalwood, the *Daphnidium cubeba*, and numerous others; the mugwort and saffron are considered as emmenagogues, and the powerful abortive properties of the blighted spurs of Rice and Maize are perfectly well known.

The Chinese practitioners have from time immemorial employed mercurial preparations against syphilis, arsenic against scrofulous affections, herpetic diseases and certain intermittent fevers, iron for the purpose of reinvigorating the blood. Borax is prescribed for the thrush; the nitrate of soda as a diuretic; the carbonate of lime as an absorbent and an oily calcareous liniment as efficacious for burns or scalds.

Ancient authors recommend the ashes of sea weeds for goitre.—The Chinese use as we do sulphur, acetate of copper, castor-oil,

gum-gutta, aloes and rhubarb; the aconite of veratrum and of colchicum; camphor, musk, opium and the plants *solanum*.

They have sternutatory, sealagogue and anthelmintic remedies similar to ours; moreover, they believe they are in possession of a great number of substances capable of preventing or dispelling intoxication (*Betonica officinalis*, *Hovenia dulcis*, *Chrysanthemum Album*, Nutmeg and Borax); or others exercising such an influence over the secretion of milk as to stop it (the germ of barley); and others to promote it (the water plantain).

In addition to that, what is very remarkable is that anæsthetic surgery, general or local, has been practised in China from very ancient times. The great surgeon Houa-go, who praised *hydrothérapie*, was already making use of a kind of *Atropa* described by the Pen-tsaio and which produced insensibility sufficient to permit the practice of his most serious operations upon the lower belly. The *Datura alba* possesses the same quality. Besides this, the *Azalea procumbens*, which when mixed with andromedes and henbane, may, when mixed with the powder of the root of wolf's-bane, produce a local insensibility which will be useful in minor operations.

It would be fastidious to prolong further this parallel, the preceding examples being amply sufficient to demonstrate the general similitude of the Chinese Materia Medica with that of Europeans. Is it needful at this time to insist upon the necessary and apparent differences?—I think it is not; but I am conscious that I shall have accomplished but a part of my task and fulfilled but one half of my design, if I do not communicate to my colleagues what I have remarked concerning several new facts which have attracted my attention and upon the medical doctrines of where the explanations relative to each substance bear a visible impress.

The theoretical ideas of the antipodes, sometimes the same as those which guide us,

are generally more rational and advanced than was supposable. By the side of a doctrine somewhat obsolete (*archaïque*), that of specifics, we see existing the most modern physiological ideas. For example, we find in many passages the assertion of the pathological state of liquids. A *Bignonia*, undetermined, restores the flow of the blood; whilst the rhubarb can not only prevent its corruption, but render it fluid when it is coagulated.

But naturally the solids are the seat of the most common lesions. And as each of the principal medicaments is directed to remedy one or many of the most important parts of the viscera, that permits the modified retirement of various parts of the organism by the appropriate means. Sometimes, however, the active substance, such as a certain *Carduus* (thistle?) penetrates simultaneously in what the Chinese practitioners call "the twelve roads," and affects, by the same stroke, the whole economy of the body.

In the same manner, the elimination or expulsion of poisons, and consequently of the remedies, is effected in special ways; so if the case occur, the morbid water is carried away internally: whence the idea of treating hydrophobia by the use of *mylabris* or the grasshopper, which produce abortion and expel the pretended *fœtus canin*;—that is to say the virus is considered as a living creature. Unfortunately, if the premises be right, the conclusion is contestable and the corollary absolutely inadmissible.

The Chinese doctors recognize the fact that there are some antagonistic substances and some others which are incompatible in the same form, and that they can be used reciprocally as antidotes. Also they recommend the non-association of *Ta-ky* (a species of thistle before mentioned) with *Glycirrhiza*, *Chamædaphne* and the *Helminthocorton*; whilst according to their advice the *Bidens parviflora* is good for the stings of wasps and scorpions and the bites of venomous serpents; the *Nelumbo* as efficacious against poisoning by crabs, and to

combat the poisonous effects of mushrooms. Alum or the root of *Cichorium* (succory) is precious as well as the libanotis to prevent that of aconite.

According to their opinion an efficacious antidote to arsenic will be found in the *Phaseolus augulatus*, so that it is possible to think that this species appertaining to an inoffensive gender, possesses, exceptionally, an activity *pharmaco-dynamique* comparable to that of the calabar bean and superior to that of another leguminous plant—namely, the *Cytisus Laburnum*, whose properties (as an antidote to poison) are perhaps analogous to those of the *Phaseolée* exotic.

In order to quite fulfil my programme I must not fail to point out some particular things which denote on the part of the Chinese an observation both delicate and sagacious. Of this number are the favorable effects of the germ of barley upon digestive troubles and the resolutive action exercised upon the opacity of the cornea by nitre or sal ammoniac. One other fact of considerable importance has been observed by them:—namely, the immunity with respect to goitre for all who make use of water conserved in leaden vessels and the possibility of preventing this degeneration by the administration of saturnine preparations.

Finally, I call the attention of therapeutical professors to some substances vaunted in the far East, which are, without all being heroic medicaments, nevertheless worth being submitted to the proof of experiments with animals and to severe clinical observation. Such are *Anemarrhena asphodelorus* employed for the same purpose as Scille (?) the *Pardanthus Chinensis*, to which are attributed properties the most remarkable and of the greatest variety; the *Pupalia geniculata*, whose root is acid, producing saliva and used in rheumatism, &c.; the *Passarina chamadaphne*, whose tincture is frequently employed as a cordial, tonic and febrifuge; the *Rehmannia Chinensis*, useful in general debility; the *Dimorphanthus edulis*, frequently prescribed for loss of blood, diseases of

the heart and others, the *Gynocadia odorata* whose seeds are extolled as remedies for skin diseases and syphilis, and among the febrifuges the *Tournefortia argusina*, the *Trichosantes dioica*, and above all the *Dichroa febrifuga*, whose reputation is so great in Cochin-China, and which undoubtedly merits better than the preceding the title of substitute of Quinquina.

These are, gentlemen, the most salient facts presented by your commission in the *Materia Medica* of the Chinese; as they are likewise our inductions from the point of view of the actual state and doctrinal tendencies of the Chinese practitioners.

The Academy is now able to appreciate in a measure the considerable importance and the high value of the conscientious and scientific work submitted to our examination and will adopt, we are hopeful, the opinion of its Commissioners in the following terms:

The studies of M. M. Léon Soubeiran and de Thiersant *sur la Matière médicale des Chinois* constitute a true progress in relation to anterior publications. Without resolving all difficulties or dissipating all doubts, their work is certainly the most correct and most complete upon this branch of medical knowledge. This work offers a great attraction to scientific curiosity in the mass of facts which it brings together, as important as they are novel, and certainly cannot fail to serve as a basis for decisive ulterior researches having for their object the elucidation of all the questions appertaining to the history of medicine among the peoples of the far East.

Therefore, Gentlemen, your commission cannot hesitate to submit to the approbation of the Academy the following conclusions:

- 1st.—To thank the Authors for their very interesting Communication.
- 2nd.—To congratulate them on the acquired results and encourage them to persevere in the laborious and eminently useful researches which they have undertaken.
- 3rd.—To recommend M. M. Léon Soubeiran

and Dabry de Thiersant to the kind consideration of the Minister of Public Instruction in order to obtain the print-

ing, at the expense of the State, of their scientific work entitled *Etudes sur la Matière Médicale des Chinois*.

SHORT NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS

AND LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

The Ven Archdeacon Gray's work entitled "Walks in the City of Canton" is, we are glad to learn, at length in the hands of the binder, and will very shortly be issued. The volume is a large octavo of some 700 pages, and, judging from the advance sheets we have been permitted to see, promises to be of great interest both to residents in China and to the home public.

In the September number of the *Oriental* there are several papers of especial interest to residents in China "Notes from the Journal of a Tour in the North of China," by Dr. Legge, and a continuation of the paper called "Japan Visited by an Old China Resident" (Mr. Edkins) are amongst them. "An American's Travels Round the World" describes a visit paid to China and Japan by the late Mr. W. H. Seward, the well known American statesmen.

Dr. S. Wells William's mandarin dictionary is at length an accomplished fact. The work has been warmly welcomed by students and sinologues and is most creditable to the author, the typography also being of a high class. We shall review it at length in a future issue, and meanwhile congratulate the Nestor of sinologues on the successful issue of his labours. Like all dictionaries it is of course open to criticism, but it is a very sensible advance on anything which has preceded it.

We have received two remarkably well compiled volumes, published by order of Mr. Hart, the Inspector General of Chinese

Maritime Customs; one being a collection of port catalogues of the Chinese Customs collection at the Vienna Exhibition of 1873, compiled to illustrate the international exchange of products; and the other a statistical statement of trade of the Treaty Ports for the last ten years, also compiled for the same institution. For excellence of typography these works would not suffer by comparison with the work of any of the best home printing-offices, and the care shown in their arrangement reflects great credit upon all concerned in their compilation. The port catalogues, by the way, will be found most useful adjuncts to existing dictionaries, many terms given in the former being absent from the best compilations issued previous to the current year. Mr. Hart deserves the thanks of the foreign communities in China for this fresh instance of his desire to make the scholarship and intelligence of his subordinates of really *public* service.

We are glad to learn that there is every prospect of definite arrangements for the republication of Dr. S. Wells William's Cantonese Dictionary being shortly made, an eminent local scholar having expressed his willingness to undertake the task of editing and amending it. It is not, however, proposed to materially increase the size of the book, though it is possible that the Chinese text of each sentence will be published in a supplementary volume with page-for-page references. We should prefer to see it at the foot of each column, but in any case we trust that in some way the character will be given.