CACTUS GRANDIFLORUS.

BY AD. LIPPE, M. D.

This remedy has been but lately introduced into our Materia Medica. The provings and reports of its curative powers, incorporated in a valuable essay, by Dr. Rocco Rubini, and presented to the English reading Homœopathicians, but a short time ago, in a careful translation, enable me to give a report of its therapeutical use, to confirm the pathogenesis of the remedy, and to add a few new observations.

Before doing so it may be well to say something in general about the introduction of new remedies. The views of Dr. Russell as expressed in his note to Cactus grand., supply a good text on which to base our remarks. He says, in that note,* which is copied in my translation, page 30: "So small a number of the multitude of medicines fulfil the expectation raised by the terms employed by those who introduce them to our notice, that busy practitioners may well be pardoned if they inquire somewhat suspiciously for the credentials of a new candidate for their attention: and as the name of Dr. Rubini may probably not be familiar to most of the readers of this journal, some account of the way in which this proving of *Cactus* came over to us may satisfy the legitimate curiosity of our colleagues, and, perhaps, induce them to receive the new comer with more cordiality than if he presented himself as a stranger without any introduction."

From this first sentence of Dr. Russell's note, we take the following proposition for consideration. "Busy practitioners inquire somewhat suspiciously for the credentials of a new

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* British Journal of Homœopathy, No. XC., Oct. '64, p. 543.

candidate for their attention." That practitioners, especially the busy practitioner, inquire into new remedies is a very natural thing—nay, it is their duty; and that they are suspicious is again very natural, as deception in that direction has been practiced, as in the case of Fickel. But the question we wish now to dwell upon is this. Is a new candidate expected to lay *credentials* before the practitioner? and what credentials are supposed necessary and admissible? Do we live in a republic of science, or must we imitate the Allopathic School, in their hereditary presumptions, their exclusiveness, their aversion to everything new, their opposition to all discoveries not emanating from their own high authorities? The stranger presenting himself for admission, is a new remedy, he can appear in a variety of dresses or forms. He may come as a specific for specific diseases, as for instance, Mephitis for Hooping Cough or Crotalus for Yellow Fever, etc. If the stranger in *that* dress knocks at the door of Homœopathy it must be informed that it asks admittance at the wrong door and be advised to apply at the door of Specificists, alias Eclectics, alias Syncretists; as a home might be found there, at least, for a time. But if the stranger says, here I am, I have been proved, several persons partook of me and they have put on record all and every change of sensation produced by me on them, will you look at me, and if you see a sick person who complains, as did the provers, I think, with the aid of the Hahnemannian light I can show you how these complaints will take flight as I enter, therefore try me, and I shall abide by the experiment. So comes the stranger, we know him, but do not know the prover or provers or the recorder of facts personally, they are all alike strangers to us. Is it in good taste, is it logical and sensible to ask the recorder of facts for his credentials? Can these credentials, even if written on rose-colored paper by the most reliable of ladies, strengthen or weaken, alter or change the facts? The stranger will be judged by the initiated without any such *formalities.* Can we not know whether a man relating an occurrence, speaks truth or fiction; does not his own story

carry with it a conviction of truth or untruth? Will not the experienced jurist at once detect the falsification of facts by an untruthful witness? Could the skilled naturalist be deceived, should a fictitious animal or plant be described to him? Would he not be enabled to detect the fiction at once? So with us. Every proving carries with itself truth or falsehood, harmony or discord, and they are the only credentials possible or needed. Provings have been ignored, and why? We find an instance of this kind in the Annals of the British Homœopathic Society, No. XVII., September, 1864, page 403. Where Dr. Chapman (in the chair), in the discussion on "The Alternation of Medicines," and speaking of *Aloes*, says: "*It is yet no proved drug.*" It could not be supposed for a moment that Dr. Chapman, presiding over the British Homœopathic Society, was not aware that Aloes had been proved by Dr. Helbig and others as early as 1833; that Dr. Buckner published provings and notes on Aloes in 1841, Allgemeine Homœopathische Zeitung, Vol. 20, p. 263; that Dr. Roth published a report on Aloes in the Revue Critique; that an article was published by Giacomini in the Trattato Filosofico-sperimentale; that finally Dr. C. Hering published a very valuable pathogenesis of Aloes, comprising all the former publications and his own provings, filling one hundred and eighteen pages in his Americanische Arzneiprufungen, in 1857, a translation of which is now given in the American Homœopathic Review. Dr. C. must have had some other potent reason for denying to the provings of the Aloes admittance into good society, at least in England. Should these lines fall under the notice of Dr. Chapman, he would much gratify one of the transatlantic Homœopathicians by giving an explanation. Does our learned colleague refuse admittance to all of Dr. C. Hering's valuable provings, or only to that of Aloes, and wherefore?

Cactus grandiflorus fared better, and on being properly and ceremoniously introduced, it went to the "*Translator;*" when translated, and with all its omissions and errors, it went over the Continent, and was republished in Leipzig; it crossed the

Atlantic, and was reprinted in the Review. *The Translator* is no stranger to us, and is known as the champion of a literature exposed as unreliable and falsified, full of innumerable omissions and perversions; and also for his peculiar ideas in the German translation of *Fuss* with *Leg*, persistently insisting that no one should venture to correct it; considering himself and his dictum far above the authority of dictionaries and philology. And therefore our temerity was certainly pardonable if we rather suspiciously inquired into the reliability and correctness of the "translation." The result of this inquiry was a *re-translation* of Dr. Rocco Rubini's little work.

Being now in possession of the original provings, these provings conveying without doubt an earnest of their truthfulness and reliability, the next thing to be done was to test this conviction by experiment. There was but one possible mode by which this could be done. The medicine had to be given in cases in which the changed condition of the sensations of the patient corresponded with those of the remedy. The medicine was obtained from Dr. Rubini himself, as no true test could be properly applied, no reliable experiment be made with any other preparation.

Supposing some of the very learned doctors should say: "The *Cactus grandiflorus* is easily obtained; I have a night-blooming Cereus in my possession, or my friend has it in his hot-house: by taking a flower at midnight and making the alcoholic tincture, we can administer it at once." What would the result be but a failure? The two plants being quite different, no quantity of the tincture would fulfil the expectation and the terms employed by Dr. Rubini, and what would follow? The provings and the remedy would be put aside as unreliable, as a fiction. Even admitting, for the sake of argument, that the same plant either grew here wild, or, worse, was raised artificially in hot-houses, would it be prudent, safe, or consistent, to make the first clinical experiment with any other preparation than the one used and applied for the experimental provings? The climate, the soil, the seasons, all the solar and lunar influences, as well as a variety of other

causes, must certainly modify and change the medicinal powers of the plant.

The admittance of the new candidate will surely depend upon the result of the experiment, and on nothing else. If the proving is a fiction, as were those of Dr. Fickel, the fraud will be detected by the knowing ones now, as it was in 1836 by C. G. Helbig, M. D., who critically proved that Fickel's productions were and could be nothing else than fictions, impossibilities and falsehoods.

The attention was called to the applicability of the remedy in certain forms of disease, *vide* translation page 13; but the learned reviewer, Dr. Ludlam, is entirely in error when he attempts to brand the author, and translator,—who, by the way, is only responsible for a *correct* translation,—as again recommending a new specific remedy, which, like others, will prove a deception, etc. Like all other medicines, it will be a "specific" as far as it is homœopathic in a given case. Specific medicines for specific diseases are the phantoms which lead their deceived followers into Eclecticism; Homœopathicians can never look for *such* specifics. If the accomplished critic will try the experiment and prescribe *Cactus grandiflorus* homœopathically, he will earn the thanks of the profession for communicating the results of his experiment; his brethren will take it for granted that his motive was the advancement of the School, and any one expressing an adverse opinion would be considered uncharitable, unfair, and highly impertinent. Leaving to the Reviewer the pleasure of enjoying further what he terms "*execrable* English," I will now report a few cases.

The first case was kindly sent us by our indefatigable colleague, Dr. Dunham.

Case 1. A. B., aged twenty-eight years, who had generally been healthy, enlisted in the army in July, 1864. After three months he got acute, articular rheumatism in the back and limbs. After a long sickness in the hospital, he was mustered out of the service as incurable. He slowly gathered strength,

but applied to me in March, 1865, in the following condition: Muscular condition fair, limbs free from stiffness or swelling, lumbar muscles tender on pressure and stiff, especially on first moving after repose. Extensive dullness in the precordia; blowing with the first sound of the heart. A constant sense of constriction in the region of the heart and epigastrium, "*as if the heart were grasped and compressed as by a hand of iron.*" This sensation is very distressing; it is much increased by muscular exertion, and especially by reading aloud or by loud talking. *Cactus,* 100, two doses, relieved the patient entirely. No return up to the present time. He is still under observation; symptom 64 is strongly confirmed.

Case 2. A lady, eighty years of age, complains of periodical constriction of the chest, with fainting and palpitations of the heart, worse in the morning and after rising; periodical stitches in the heart. All these symptoms disappeared after two doses of *Cactus grand. 75 m.* A confirmation of symptoms 65, 66, 67, 73, 74. Symptom 7, a pressing pain in the head, as if a great weight were laying on the vertex, has been repeatedly removed by *Cactus gr.*, especially when the menstruations returned too frequently and were too profuse.

Case 3. A lady, forty years of age, who had often complained of palpitation of the heart and of rheumatism, was by *Cactus gr. 10 m.* promptly relieved from rheumatism, first in the hands, later in the feet, worse in the morning and upon beginning to move; the soles of the feet felt as if they were bruised when she walked.

The rheumatism of *Cactus gr.* goes from above downward, that of *Ledum* from below upward.

A number of patients have been benefited by *Cactus gr.*, but the improvement has not yet lasted long enough to warrant their being reported as cures.

Dr. G. Duhring published in a Western journal: "I am in my sixty-second year, and for some time have been a great sufferer from '*chronic bronchitis,*' that was accompanied with

frequent rattling of mucus, both through the day and at all hours of the night; oppression of breathing with a spasmodic cough and expectoration of mucus, also frequent attacks when attempting to go up and down stairs. Various remedies proved useless until I concluded to try some "mother tincture" of *Cactus grandiflorus* that I had accidentally prepared last year, and this at once restored my health."

Symptom 89 of the provings is hereby verified.

Dr. Chapman recommends *Cactus gr.* in a case of metastasis of rheumatism to the heart. *Vide* "Annals of the British Homœopathic Society," No. XXI., page 240.

REVIEW.

A Course of Clinical Lectures on Diphtheria, by R. Ludlam, M. D., Chicago.

It is quite refreshing to open a new homœopathic work which has something more of Homœopathy in its pages than is generally the case of late where, the homœopathicity is confined to the deceptive title page. As a medical work, it is the best we possess on this form of disease. The Pathology is well given, and the author has diligently quoted the best writers on the subject. It should be in the hands of all physicians, for all will profit by its perusal. Under the treatment of the disease, the indicative symptoms for each remedy are given; and under some of them with great precision, as under Kali bichromaticum, page 108. And much more would the author have been enabled to say, if he were in possession of *all* the provings of this valuable drug—which may not be the case since the very extended Vienna provings have been so unceremoniously abridged and robbed of some of the most indicative symptoms, by the Compilers of the British Journal. The great characteristic symptom of Kali bichr., "Ropy mucus," would not have been omitted; and do not such omissions clearly and unmistakably indicate the neces-