

*On the Uses of Belladonna.*

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there may be other allopathic practitioners who would have equal success were they to adopt, as principles of practice, *homœopathy*, *Mesmerism* or *incantation*. Successful medication requires the therapeutic appliances to meet the pathological condition of the system. "I know of no medicine except what becomes such by adaptation," was the aphorism of the medical patriarch of Leyden.

J. A. ALLEN, M.D.

*Middlebury, Vt., Dec. 8th, 1842.*

[To be continued.]

## ON THE USES OF BELLADONNA.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

THIS plant is well known to possess some specific powers, differing somewhat from all others. It has a controlling influence over the nervous powers, dilating the pupils of the eyes when taken internally or applied externally; but its power to arrest the secretion of milk in the female breast is among the most important which it possesses. If the mamma, one or both, be covered with the leaves ten days or more, beginning on the day of the accouchement, no milk will be secreted, in many instances preventing mammary abscesses. When properly applied to one breast alone, it completely prevents secretion in that, while the other secretes abundantly. From ten years' experience in the use of it for this express purpose, I know it to be so. If I wish to stop the secretion of milk at any time, it is easily done; and to do this most effectually, I take two ounces of the leaves, soak them in rum and water a little above blood heat, spread them on a cloth, over the whole lay a thin gauze, and all kept in place by quilting them well together. Thus prepared, it is to be spread over the mamma, and the whole to be supported by a suspensory bandage, passing over the neck and under the breast, keeping it constantly warm and moist. As it occasionally happens that milk cannot be drawn from a breast when secreted, giving origin to suppuration, this remedy then becomes an invaluable one by using it before the discerning powers begin to operate. I will give one example.

Mrs. M. gave birth to her first child when about 26 years old, and during this confinement a mammary abscess occurred, involving in the disease the most of the gland, and her breast was lanced seventeen times. With her second child, no milk could be drawn through the nipple by any means whatever. In her third accouchement I, for the first time, attended on her, when she told me of her previous misfortunes, and expressed great dread of what must follow. On the evening of her confinement I applied the belladonna, and kept it on ten days, defending her linen with oiled silk; and not any milk was secreted in this breast, while the other secreted well. This took place in 1832. In 1834 and 1836 she used the same remedy for the same purpose, and with like success.

*Lowell, Dec., 1842.*

DANIEL MOWE.

P. S.—In this communication I wish to say I accidentally ascertained that in case of metastasis of mumps in females, the ovarium becomes

affected instead of the mamma, which suffers only sympathetically with the ovarium.

D. MOWE.

### ON THE LOCATIONS OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BRAIN.

[Translated for this Journal by JOHN F. MAY, M.D.—Continued from page 351.]

THE gnawing animals form a group so refractory to the doctrine of locations, that they alone are sufficient to authorize the following conclusions—1st. Either the general or partial mechanism of the animal invariably explains the diversity in the forms of the head. 2d. Very often these forms do not in the least agree with the system of Gall. Such are the conclusions which we shall now see confirmed by a few researches in regard to carnivorous animals.

Among this class we have already said that the cranium of the polecat (*la fanine*) and weasel is broad behind, and narrow across the temples; yet no one will pretend that these animals are much inclined to friendship. The domestic ferret does not attach itself to its master, but will frequently bite at him when an opportunity offers, and for this reason hunters are cautious even in touching them. No one, we presume, will therefore deny that the ferret is of a sanguinary disposition; and yet the narrowness at the temples is in strong contrast with the breadth at the posterior portion of the cranium.

But we may be told that the brain of these animals does not differ enough from that of other carnivorous animals to overthrow the essential part of the doctrine of locations. The cone which it represents is in truth more elongated; but its broadest part, besides being tolerably near the temples, can it not be considered as the seat of cunning and destructiveness? We reply: "Your distinctions of organs do not rest upon differences of texture, for the surface of the cerebral hemispheres is everywhere similar. They are based entirely upon differences of position. If, then, in order to render the exceptionable forms of certain crania of carnivorous animals conformable to your laws, you transpose the phrenological organs, you renounce at once your only fixed point, and necessarily fall into the indefinite. Moreover, since your minute divisions have in advance disposed of the whole extent of the encephalic hemispheres, by assigning such a position to cunning, and such a one to amativity, friendship, &c., you can displace nothing for one particular species, without introducing confusion and disorder into your science. The impossibility of translocation being therefore once established, we shall now seek, upon your principles, to determine the seat of the carnivorous propensities in weasels and ferrets."

These propensities reside in the parieto-temporal region; but as this includes the whole space from the forehead to the occiput, it is necessary, for the purpose of being understood, to arrive at a more precise determination. The region of which we are speaking presents, in all carnivorous animals, two portions which are very distinct: the one situated either in front or above the zygomatic process (*racine*); the other, poste-