

SCUTELLARIA LATERIFLORA, or SCULLCAP

This plant has a smooth, square, and branching stem; its leaves are of an ovate shape, toothed on the margin, and supported on long petioles or foot stalks; the lower ones are somewhat heart-shaped. The calyx is two-lipped, the mouth of which, after the corolla falls out, is closed with a helmet-form lid. The corolla is also two-lipped, with the tube bent; the upper lip is concave and entire, the lower one three-lobed. The racemes are axillary and leafy.

The *Scutellaria lateriflora* is found in most sections of the United States, growing in woods, meadows, near waters, etc. It blossoms in July and August. The root is perennial, and the herbage annual. The herbage should be gathered for medicinal use, the latter part of summer. It possesses considerable antispasmodic and tonic properties; and is highly esteemed by some as an effectual antihydrophobic. We notice it at this time, chiefly for the purpose of introducing Dr. Warner's remarks on its properties and uses, and also his prescription for the prevention and cure of hydrophobia. His remarks and prescriptions, as they appeared in the *Old Indian Physician* of Oct. 29th, 1836, are the following:

EDITORS.

This is the plant which the Old School pronounce "inert," and "when taken internally producing no obvious effects upon the system"! Fy! fy! upon men—physicians too—M.D.'s to boot, who, under cover of that imposing trisyllabic, *Fac-ul-ly*, try to make society at large believe that they understand the medical properties of plants, when they are perfectly ignorant of them—know not how to compound them for medical use, nor how to administer them when compounded by medical botanists! And how should they? They have never made medical botany a study—never inquired into the nature, medicinal operations, and effects upon the system, of such plants as are used for medicine in the various forms of disease; and yet they have effrontery to deny their efficacy, even when they see their own patients saved from the consequences of their malpractice, by botanical treatment.

It is time the ignorance in this respect, of the Old School, was exposed. It is high time the people—the *world*—were disabused concerning the impositions of the medical faculty with respect to their pretended knowledge of the medical properties of plants on the one hand, and, on the other, in regard to their false and most dangerous theory concerning the use of mercury and the lancet. People have been poisoned and bled to death long enough: it is time there was a reform in this part of science, as in every thing else that needs reform; and the signs of the times indicate, what must sooner or later take place—a thorough reformation in the practice of

medicine. Æsculapius never intended his temple to be plastered with mortar made up of calomel and human blood. It has been for centuries, and still is, violated by the immolation of human victims to a false deity, and it must come down. The Old school may make merry with their prediction; so did Belshazzar, just before he saw the hand writing on the wall. The old desecrated temple will be demolished by the united force of the Medical Botanical Faculty, and a new one erected, and dedicated to pure unstained Nature. The foundation is already laid.

Concerning *Scutellaria lateriflora*, Professor Rofinesque very justly remarks, “Dr. W. Barton and Dr. Tully have strenuously asserted its total inertness, but without analyzing the plant, and denying instead of proving.” In the same way the Old School impose on society respecting any valuable medicinal plant; they deny its efficacy, without knowing any thing about it. It may be said in reply, that their libraries furnish books containing descriptions of the medical properties of plants. Granted. But unless they know how to compound and administer them, what can they know of the medical properties of any plant? They might as well expect a person to learn a particular trade from hearing the use of the tools described; and yet, swelling up within the circumference of their diplomatic reputation, they pretend to judge the virtues and efficacy of medicinal plants! Preposterous. *Scutellaria lateriflora* or Scullcap, is a tonic, astringent, antispasmodic, and an effectual antihydrophobic. I have proved it very beneficial in nervous diseases, convulsions, tetanus, St. Vitus’ dance, tremors, fistula, etc.

I now proceed to record what has never before been given to the pubhe; viz: *A certain preventilive of, and an infallible cure , hydrophobia.* Cure for this dreaded and dreadful disease have frequently been published, and some containing directions for the use of Scullcap, but none has proved efficacious in all cases. The one I recommend is an Indian prescription, and I unqualifiedly pronounce it an effectual preventive and cure. It has never failed. And that families may, in case of necessity, avail themselves of it, I respectfully, but urgently, request them to preserve the prescription, and if administered strictly according to directions, it will, I repeat, be found an infallible remedy.

I. A CERTAIN PREVENTIVE OF HTDROPHOBIA.

1. Immediately after the person is bitten, let him be put to bed and kept warm, and as soon as possible apply to the wound a polticc of raw onions or garlics, cut or pounded fine, and let the poultice be frequently renewed. The Indians make use of wild leek—(*Allium canadense*.)
2. Have made immediately a strong decoction or tea of bone-set, (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) it cannot be made too strong, and let it cool down to a blood heat. Into a quart put one fourth of an

ounce of sal eratus, (bi-carbonate of potash,) or if this be not at hand, use what the Indians do—the same quantity of strong (white) ashes. Of this tea, take from a wine glassful to a gill [~4oz or 140ml] every ten or fifteen minutes, and after the third glass is taken, add to it a tea spoonful of common lobelia, (*Lobelia inflata*) in tincture, (the Indians use powder,) and continue it until the patient pukes freely. Then discontinue the lobelia, and continue taking the bone-set tea in the same quantity every half hour or hour, until it operates freely as a cathartic.

3. Then, having a strong decoction or tea of scullcap, (*Scutellaria lateriflora*) prepared blood warm, into a quart of it put one eighth of an ounce of sal eratus, or the same quantity of strong wood (white) ashes. Of this tea let the patient take often enough to keep up a free perspiration or sweat. Repeat this course two or three days, and there is no danger from hydrophobia.

II. INFALLIBLE CURE FOR HYDROPHOBIA;

1. In addition to the poultice of raw onions or garlic applied to the wound; let the same be applied to the arm-pits, the cavities under the shoulders, and be frequently renewed.

2. Then let the same course be pursued as above directed, with one exception. A person under hydrophobia is frequently seized with spasms; therefore, when taking the scullcap, as in the third of the foregoing directions, if the spasms be on him, to a wine glass or a gill of the scullcap tea add one third of a tea spoonful of the tincture of lobelia—not enough to act as an emetic, but as an antispasmodic, add let it be continued till the spasms subside. Lobelia must not be given with the scullcap, except when spasmodic action appears, and not omitted during the continuance of action. Let this course be pursued day and night, keeping up a perspiration, till all the alarming symptoms disappear, and the result will be a permanent cure. E. WARNER,

Indian Physician.

SYMPTOMS OF HYDROPHOBIA.

A slight pain in the bitten part resembling a rheumatic pain. Sometimes an itching sensation is felt. Wandering pains, with an uneasiness and heaviness; disturbed sleep, and frightful dreams, accompanied with great restlessness; sudden startings, and spasms; sighing, anxiety, and a love for solitude. These symptoms continuing to increase daily, pains begin to shoot from the place which was wounded, all along up the throat, with a straitness and sensation of choking; and a horror and dread at the sight of water, and other liquids, together with a loss of appetite and tremor.

A vomiting of bilious matter soon comes on, in the course of the disease; and an intense hot fever ensues, attended with continual watching, great thirst, dryness and roughness of the tongue, hoarseness of the voice, and the discharge of saliva from the mouth, which the patient is continually spitting out, together with spasms of the genital and urinary organs, in consequence of which the evacuations are forcibly thrown out. His respiration is laborious and uneasy, but his judgment is unaffected; and as long as he retains the power of speech, his answers are distinct.

In some few instances a severe delirium arises, and closes the tragic scene; but it more frequently happens that the pulse becomes tremulous and irregular—that convulsions ensue—and that nature, being at length exhausted, sinks under the pressure of misery.

CASES OF HYDROPHOBIA.

During my residence among the Caughnewago tribe two Indians were bitten by a mad wolf. One of them was eventually attacked with symptoms of hydrophobia, and effectually cured by the foregoing prescription: On the other it operated as a preventative.

The most frightful case of hydrophobia I ever witnessed or heard of was at a place called the Ridge, on Grand River. Father and son had both been bitten by a mad dog. The former I did not see. The disease attacked him suddenly and violently. The treatment he received from the attending physician not affording him any relief, he became so desperately rabid that; painful as was the necessity, he was smothered to death. When I arrived at the Ridge the son was chained to the floor, but not at that moment under a paroxysm. Soon after, however, he was seized with one, and a more frightful and pitiable object I never beheld: Having witnessed the efficacy of the Indian remedy, I proposed it in that case. The attending physician remarked, "If a cure can be had, no matter where it comes from." The remedy was applied, and in six weeks the patient was restored.

During my residence in Baltimore county, Maryland, a number of dogs were bitten and went mad. To one of them, which was beginning to exhibit signs of hydrophobia; I gave scullcap, mixed with his food, so that he could lap it up with his tongue. He afterwards lay down in a warm place, and slept for six hours. There he perspired freely, and the next day was as sprightly as ever.

In July, 1834, a son of Samuel Vandergriff, of this city, was bitten through the nose, while sleeping, by a *rat*. Some time after, the face beginning to swell, a physician was called in, who treated the case unsuccessfully. Mr. Vandergriff called on me to prescribe for his son. He

described the neck, face, and eyes, as much swollen—remarked that the boy occasionally had spasms—“foamed” at the mouth and “snapped” at him while dressing the wound. I sent a young man to administer the medicine, and the boy got well. I could record many more cases which were cured by the above prescription, but these, I trust, will be deemed sufficient. E.W.