

SANTONIN POISONING.

DR. P. C. REMONDINO (San Diego, California) writes: I was interested in reading in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* of the account given by Dr. J. Anderson Smith, concerning the experience of a little child with santonin. I had a somewhat remarkable personal experience myself. In 1870 I was in Tours awaiting an assignment to some corps of the French army as a surgeon. Being interested in numismatics, old historical monuments and edifices, Tours and its surroundings afforded me with an unending list of interesting objects. Among my acquaintances there was a manufacturing chemist, who had a strong numismatic proclivity. I had one day secured a very rare and interesting coin of the early part of the reign of Henry III., and realising its rarity I dropped it on my friend to show him my prize. He was busy at the time in his counting-room, and I loitered into one of the laboratories, where, finding a tray of what I took to be chocolate drops, I carelessly ate about a dozen in an absent-minded way, without thinking that in all probability they might contain some drug.

Soon after seeing my friend I walked to another part of the town, having that day learnt that the ancient tomb of St. Martin had been discovered and restored. This tomb is an old historical relic, and I longed to stand on the spot which Richard Cœur de Lion had visited prior to his departure for Palestine. I soon found the place—one of the old towers alone remaining of the old abbey, this being all that the Vandals of the Revolution had left of one of France's great historical monuments. I descended into the vault where the original tomb is said to be; there were many worshippers at the shrine, and the bright light from the great number of candles burning about the gilt shrine and the darkness beyond in the recesses, gave the place a weird appearance. I must have remained in the underground vault some twenty minutes, when, on returning to the outer air, I was no little dumbfounded by observing that the sky had suddenly turned of a greenish yellow tinge, as if I had looked at it through a piece of an old greenish wine bottle. It was then late, and lights were being lit; these had a greenish, weird, and ghastly look, and all whom I met looked like resurrected plague corpses. I am not superstitious, but I must say I felt very uncomfortable; at first I laid it all to the optical effects of having remained too long in the subterranean abode of the dead Saint, and to the combined glimmer of so many candles and the reflection of the gilded shrine. I shut and rubbed my eyes, but all to no purpose. To add to my discomfort and disorder, I began to experience a singing or ringing noise in both ears, and some dizziness. I began to seriously consider whether some mental derangement was possible; I pinched myself to make sure I was awake, and not in a dream, and tried to indulge in some Adam Smith or Locke moralising, to test my logical faculties. In this unpleasant frame of body and mind I reached my hotel, hoping that there, at least, these hallucinations or diabolical influences and sensations would disappear. The waiters and guests all looked like men who had returned after a three days' drowning and greenish; the lights had an unnatural, condensed, yellowish glare, and at last, to escape all these ghostly oppressions, I took myself to my room and darkness, and by the aid of a chair climbed into the middle of the spacious bedstead, where I soon fell asleep. It was not until the next morning that, on looking at the unnatural colour of the urine, it dawned upon me that I had been eating a lot of worm lozenges. The yellowness of vision remained for part of that day, and then it disappeared, after which I experienced no further bad result.

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BOOKS, Etc., RECEIVED.

- Practical Manual of Diseases of Women and Uterine Therapeutics for Students and Practitioners. By H. Macnaughton Jones, M.D., etc. Fifth Edition. London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cox. 1891.
- A Pocket Epitome of the *British Pharmacopoeia*. By Russell Coombe, M.A., F.R.C.S. London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cox. 1891.
- The Seamen's Medical Guide in Preserving the Health of a Ship's Crew. Revised by Archibald Finlay. New Edition. London: George Philip and Son. 1891.
- A Practical Treatise on Diseases of the Skin. By Henry G. Piffard, A.M., M.D.; and R. M. Fuller, M.D. With fifty full page Original Plates. London: H. K. Lewis. 1891.
- Diphtheria, its Natural History and Prevention (Milroy Lectures, 1891). By R. Thorne Thorne, M.B. Lond., etc. London: Macmillan and Co. 1891.
- Baden-Baden as a Watering Place. By Mr. Fray. Baden-Baden: Spies.
- Thirty-Third Annual Report of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode.
- Everybody's Writing-Desk Book. By Charles Nisbet and Don Lemon. London: Saxon and Co. 1891.

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