

INDIAN HERBALOGY
OF
NORTH AMERICA

by

ALMA R. HUTCHENS

N. G. TRETCHIKOFF

Herbalist, General Librarian & Director

NATALIE K. TRETCHIKOFF

Russian Material and Bibliography

A Study of Anglo-American, Russian and Oriental Literature
on Indian Medical Botany of North America with illustrations,
Glossary, Index and Annotated Bibliography

MERCO
620 Wyandotte East
Windsor 14, Ontario, Canada

BLACK INDIAN HEMP *Apocynum cannabinum*, L.
(N.O.: Apocynaceae)

Features: Native to North America, of the Dogbane family, growing wild in pastures and fields.

It is one of several species called Indian hemp. The root grows deep in the soil, supporting a plant 1-5 ft. tall with erect, smooth and pointed leaves and resembling Bitter root (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*). They are distinguishable by their leaves and flowers. The leaves of this species are oblong and sharper pointed at both ends, while those of the Bitter root are pointed only at the outer end and quite round at the stalk end.

The flowers of this species are greenish-yellow, a light pink or purple inside, while those of the Bitter root are white, tinged with red. Poisonous to stock, but usually avoided due to the bitter, rubbery juice. The seeds, oil and fibre of hemp have uses for paint, bird preparations and clothing.

Indians made nets and rope from the fibres of pounded stems and roots.

Medicinal Part: The root.

Solvent: Water.

Bodily Influence: Anodyne, Hypnotic, Antispasmodic, Diuretic, Diaphoretic, Expectorant, Cathartic, Tonic.

Uses: The dried rhizomes and roots were used as a heart stimulant and for kidney complaints by the Indians. The root should be used with caution as too large an amount will cause vomiting, etc. This plant has the same attributes as Bitter root for the relief of dropsy.

A quote from the book by Dr. G. Wood and Dr. E. H. Ruddock, M.D. on Vitalogy: "It is an infallible remedy for the cure of thread or

pinworms. For this purpose take twenty drops of the tincture three times a day for three successive days, then use an injection of cold water and the worms will be dislodged." If after this there are still symptoms, take a laxative tea a day before the full moon, and repeat the above each month until the pests have disappeared. We have found they are more active at this time and respond more completely to treatment.

Black Indian hemp root produces sleep without derangement of the digestive organs, principally allaying spasmodic pains of nervous origin where there is marked nervous depression.

Dose: 1 teaspoonful of the root to 1 pint of boiling water; take a tablespoonful of the tea three to eight times a day. Of the tincture, 2-5 min. four times a day.

Homoeopathic Clinical: The whole fresh plant, root included, should be used for making the tincture or infusion—Ascites, Catarrh, Coryza, Diabetes (insipidus), Diarrhoea, Dropsy, Enuresis, Heart (affections of), Hydrocephalus, Menorrhagia, Metrorrhagia, Nausea, Neuralgia, Snuffles, Tobacco-heart, Urinary difficulties, Vomiting.

Russian Experience: Indian hemp is known as Kendir konoplevy in Russia. The plant does not grow wild, but by their laboratory research and clinical experiments cultivation of North American Hemp is encouraged.

Agro-Technic solved detailed requirements. One acre yields up to 1,500 lb. of dry root and rhizome, which should yield \$1,500 an acre by the latest price list of dealers and factories.

Uses: Used clinically for many heart conditions and blood circulation. Disturbance or congestion of second and third degree resulting from rheumatically affected heart, cardiac sclerosis, blood pressure and many other conditions depending on the normal flow of blood.

India and Pakistan Influence: India and Pakistan contribute greatly in the use of Hemp, as their knowledge has a history that exceeds ours. They use preparations of the whole plant.

Charas: The resinous exudation that collects on the leaves is a valuable narcotic. They found it has great value when Opium cannot be used. To encourage sleep and effectively administered in Malaria, Periodical Headache, Migraine, Acute mania, Insanity, Delirium, Whooping cough, Cough of T.B., Asthma, Brain Anaemia, Tetanus, Convulsion, Nervous exhaustion and Dysuria. Acts as anodyne in severe pain of Eczema and Neuralgia. Anaesthetic in Dysmenorrhoea also as an aphrodisiac.

Hashish: A special preparation of the dry leaves and flowers for Dyspepsia, Gonorrhoea, Appetizer, Nervine, Stimulant and Bowel disorders. They do not consider the seeds as a narcotic, infusions are given when treating Gonorrhoea.

Dose: Powder of Indian hemp is usually given in $\frac{1}{6}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ grain. The agent is far reaching and complicated and should be administered under super-

vision of authorized persons only as it requires great caution and consideration.

Externally: To resolve Tumours: paste of fresh leaves. To remove dandruff and head lice: juice of the fresh leaves. Dressing for wounds, ulcers and sores: powder of the leaves. Ophthalmia and other eye diseases: poultice of the leaves applied to the closed lids. Haemorrhoids and Orchitis: poultice of the leaves applied to affected parts.