

**ON THE SOURCES OF THE
HOMŒOPATHIC MATERIA MEDICA.
THREE LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE
LONDON HOMŒOPATHIC
HOSPITAL IN JANUARY, 1877**

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BY

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ON THE
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MATERIA MEDICA.

LECTURE I.

THE FRAGMENTA DE VIRIBUS.—THE MATERIA MEDICA PURA.

GENTLEMEN,—In the two previous courses of lectures which I have had the honour of delivering from this place, I have discussed the principal constituents of the *Materia Medica* of Homœopathy. I do not propose, in the limited time allotted to me in the present session, to go over any of that ground again. But there are certain points on which, in my survey of the materials of homœopathic practice, I feel that I touched but lightly, which nevertheless would amply repay a longer consideration. Such consideration I propose, on the present occasion, to give to two subjects connected with the Homœopathic *Materia Medica*,—the first being the Sources of that *Materia Medica*, the second the Nature and Laws of Drug Action. I gave a brief account of the former in my introductory lecture, but am glad of the opportunity of setting it forth more fully; the latter involves questions continually arising in my discussion of each drug, but which I found no place for considering separately and generally. The present course, therefore, will be, in these two respects, supplementary to those I have already delivered.

That which Homœopathy calls its "Materia Medica" is a collection of the pathogenetic effects of drugs—of the derangements they are capable of causing in the healthy body, on the basis of which it works its principle, "let likes be treated by likes." Some of these pathogenetic effects are observations of poisonings and over-dosings, as recorded in general medical literature; but the great bulk of them are the result of "provings" of the various drugs on the healthy human body, or of their side-effects (so to speak) when administered as medicines to the sick. Such collections of drug-symptoms are called "pathogenesies;" and they have been appearing from time to time in the school of Hahnemann ever since 1805. The history of the several publications containing them, and an analysis of the material presented in each, will constitute the account of the Sources of the Homœopathic Materia Medica which I design to bring before you.

1. The earliest volume of the series is that of Hahnemann's entitled *Fragmenta de viribus medicamentorum positivis, sive in sano corpore humano observatis*. It was written in Latin, as its title implies, and published at Leipsic in 1805. A copy of the original edition, and another of the more elegant form in which Dr. Quin edited the work in 1834, lie on the table before you.

The *Fragmenta de viribus* contains pathogenesies of twenty-seven drugs, which you will see enumerated in the list I now hand round, with the number of symptoms in each.

I.—*Fragmenta de viribus.*

	Hahnemann.	Obs. of others.
Aconitum napellus	138	75
Acris tinctura (Causticum)	30	0
Arnica montana	117	33
Belladonna	101	304
Camphora	73	74
Cantharides	20	74
Capsicum annuum	144	3
Chamomilla	272	3
Cinchona	123	99
Cocculus	156	6
Copaifera balsamum	12	8

	Hahnemann.	Obs. of others.
Cuprum vitriolatum	29	38
Digitalis	23	33
Drosera	36	4
Hyoscyamus	45	290
Ignatia	157	19
Ipecacuanha	70	13
Ledum	75	5
Melampodium (Helleborus)	32	25
Mezereum	32	34
Nux vomica	257	51
Papaver somniferum (Opium)	82	192
Pulsatilla	230	29
Rheum	39	13
Stramonium	59	157
Valeriana	25	10
Veratrum album	181	106

You will notice that some of the symptoms of each drug are "observations of others." This does not mean that Hahnemann had as yet any fellow-observers. The "others" are in every case authors from whose writings he has cited. The symptoms for which he himself vouches are such as had come under his own observation as effects of poisoning or excessive dosing, and (in far larger proportion) those which he had obtained by provings on himself and others. "I have instituted experiments" he writes in the preface "in chief part on my own person, but also on some others whom I knew to be perfectly healthy and free from all perceptible disease."

He gives no information as to his doses or mode of administration. We can shrewdly infer these, however, from the remarks on the proving of medicines made in his essay entitled *The Medicine of Experience*, which was published later in the same year (1805). "In order" he writes "to ascertain the effects of medicinal agents, we must give only one pretty strong dose to the temperate healthy person who is the subject of the experiment; and it is best to give it in solution. If we wish to ascertain the remaining symptoms which were not revealed by the first trial, we may give to another person, or to the same individual, but to the latter only after the lapse of several

days, when the action of the first dose is fully over, a similar or even a stronger portion, and note the symptoms of irritation thence resulting in the same careful and sceptical manner. For medicines that are weaker we require, in addition to a considerable dose, individuals that are healthy, it is true, but of very irritable delicate constitutions." It would thus appear that the symptoms of the *Fragmenta* obtained from provings were the results of single full doses of the several drugs.

Of the twenty-seven drugs which this volume shows to have received Hahnemann's earliest attentions, twenty-two were carried on into his *Reine Arzneimittellehre*. Two—Cuprum and Mezereum—did not reappear till the second edition of his *Chronischen Krankheiten*; and three—Cantharis, Copaiba, and Valerian—were not again taken up by himself.

2. Five years now elapsed before Hahnemann published any more pathogenesies. But all this time he must have been diligently working, both in provings and literary researches; for in 1811 appeared the first volume of his *Reine Arzneimittellehre*, containing twelve medicines, six of which were new, the pathogenesies also of those which had already appeared being considerably increased. In 1816 a second volume was published, containing the pathogenetic effects of eight medicines, together with those ascribed to the magnet. This was followed in 1817 by a third, with eight medicines; in 1818 by a fourth, with twelve; in 1819 by a fifth, with eleven; and in 1821 by a sixth, with ten.

The first edition of the *Materia Medica Pura* (so we render *Latiné* Hahnemann's name for his book), which I have now described, is a very rare work. By the kindness of my friend Dr. Carroll Dunham, of New York, I am able to lay a copy of it before you to-day; and the table which I now put into your hands will show you its contents as I have done those of the *Fragmenta de viribus*.

II.—*Reine Arzneimittellehre.* 1st ed.

	VOL. I. 1811.	Hahn.	Others.
Belladonna	176	...	474
Dulcamara	31	...	92
Cina	33	...	15
Cannabis sativa	15	...	58
Cocculus	224	...	5
Nux vomica	908	...	66
Opium	114	...	464
Moschus	0	...	99
Oleander	10	...	18
Mercurius	232	...	110
Aconite	206	...	108
Arnica	175	...	55
VOL. II. 1816.			
Causticum	99	...	176
Arsenicum	294	...	368
Ferrum	228	...	36
Ignatia	570	...	54
Magnes	243	...	51
" North Pole	286	...	14
" South Pole	237	...	46
Pulsatilla	971	...	102
Rheum	79	...	115
Rhus	409	...	334
Bryonia	408	...	103
VOL. III. 1817.			
Chamomilla	448	...	33
Cinchona	391	...	691
Helleborus	90	...	108
Asarum	14	...	254
Ipecacuanha	144	...	87
Scilla	85	...	201
Stramonium	83	...	463
Veratrum album	307	...	404
VOL. IV. 1818.			
Hyoeyamus	103	...	436
Digitalis	63	...	355
Aurum	110	...	203
Guaiaacum	26	...	116
Camphor	104	...	240
Ledum	182	...	130
Ruta	23	...	201
Sarsaparilla	34	...	111

	Hahn.	Others.
Conium	87	286
Chelidonium	23	128
Sulphur	112	49
Argentum	48	152
Vol. V. 1819.		
Euphrasia	25	90
Menyanthes	28	269
Cyclamen	8	197
Sambucus	19	97
Calceola acetica	0	255
Muriatic acid	57	217
Thuja	222	287
Taraxacum	0	209
Phosphoric acid	160	411
Spigelia	95	543
Staphisagria	210	398
Vol. VI. 1821.		
Angustura	93	209
Manganum	89	242
Capsicum	277	69
Verbascum	32	143
Colocynth	17	210
Spongia	89	227
Drosara	124	155
Bismuth	4	97
Cicuta	36	205
Stannum	95	457

There are, you will see, sixty-one medicines contained in these volumes, besides the magnet. Twenty-two of them are, as I have said, transferred from the *Fragmenta*, but always with their pathogenesies enlarged: the remaining thirty-nine are new. There is an important change now manifest, moreover, in the "Observations of Others." These had hitherto consisted entirely of citations from authors; and the description still holds good of them as they appear in the first volume of the *Reine Arzneimittellehre*. In the five years, however, which elapsed before the second was published, Hahnemann—now in Leipsic, and at the zenith of his fame—had gathered round him a band of disciples, and enlisted them in the task of proving. Of the eight medicines which appear in