

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MATERIA MEDICA

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The future development of our Materia Medica is a subject that cannot fail to interest every true Hahnemannian; under the necessity as we are of holding ourselves aloof from the traditional school of medicine, it doubly becomes our duty to develop our art to the highest pinnacle of perfection, striving to do this step by step in the true scientific spirit, thus gradually making our position unassailable.

The legacy which Hahnemann left us is predominately one of principles; however much our pathogenesis may be augmented, the underlying laws of its formulation and application remain substantially the same; grounded as we are in these fundamental principles which admit of extension only, the question naturally arises, what can be done towards perfecting our healing art?

The answer must naturally come through a proper estimate of individual capabilities combined with the spirit of advancement. The pathogenesis as it stands today in its immensity is but a fragment of what the future holds in store, much as it worries the chaff chaser now, he can not but view the future with the gravest apprehension.

The lines along which development must take place can be but dimly foreshadowed; from many natural orders we have as yet not a single proved drug; provings show the close relationship existing symptomatically between drugs related botanically, and the botanical and chemical range of the original Hahnemannian provings demonstrate the master's wonderful foresight. To him as well as to ourselves all nature lay as a partly open book awaiting the turning of the leaves to behold the hidden treasures as instanced by the great polychrest, Pulsatilla. Since his time have come to us Apis, Cactus, Gelsemium, Glonoin, and many other remedies of great power; shall we now halt and rest the sleep of death? Nature has no rewards for drones; a body at rest is dead morally as well as physically.

Every day shows us the effects of remedies of great power, but as yet unproven; as pointed out before we must explore the as yet unknown natural orders if we expect to advance the cause of truth; we must prove remedies to fill up many gaps in our therapeutics.

If I comprehend aright the spirit of the fathers, it was one of [devotion to a law which each recognised as universal, but limited and hampered only in its application because of the smallness of their recorded provings; they therefore strove uninterruptedly to increase the store, thus enabling us to now frequently cure with lithe similimum what formerly necessitated several similar remedies; this process therefore while increasing the number of symptoms, will nevertheless finally simplify therapeutics. We are, is it were, only on the borderland of the pathogenesis of the future.

The dictum, great poison, great remedy, has not seemed to be well substantiated, many apparently mild drugs having been found to have a long and deep action when potentised; that however does not alter the general proposition that remedies are useful only in proportion to their known effects. Often we meet symptoms not at present contained under any remedy, yet the symptom may be, often is, the keynote to the case in hand; after its removal by a remedy corresponding to the remainder of the disease picture, are we justified in adding it to the pathogenesis? This question takes us into deep water at once when we consider its many ramifications; in a general way it may be said that when the symptom is in consonance or harmony with the well known action if the remedy its incorporation seems proper, if however, it fails in answering this requirement 'twere better to hold the matter in abeyance. This manner of augmenting the materia medica has been largely followed and has indeed given us very brilliant records, but after all the fact

remains that many prescriptions based on these indications, are often either palliative or directly suppressive, for it appears that high potencies can also have a suppressive action. The Other way of augmenting the records by new provings is the old and pied as well as true way, worthy of being followed, and will finally overcome all obstacles, especially in that we may confidently look to it to develop the much desired symptoms which now often puzzle us.

Many of the now well known remedies had already previous to their proving given hints of their future usefulness, their pathogeneses have amplified and developed them as well as shorn them of supposed laurels.

Among the drugs needing proving is *Echinacea angustifolia*. The eclectics credit this remedy with powers over septic processes, indurated tissues and adhesions; the latter claim I have good reason to believe is correct. If this be true, although so far it is only a pathological hint, yet it may point the way to valuable ground, especially when we remember that not a few of our present remedies came to us through just such vague hints and this very school.