

## MATERIA MEDICA, A STUDY

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We are today searching for the golden key which shall unlock the gates leading to a clearer idea and more facile comprehension of our large symptomatology; many minds have traversed these paths and found methods more, or less useful for our purpose, but THE METHOD, at once simple, comprehensible and accurate has yet to be shown. All actions become simplified as they approach perfection, this holds true also of the analysis of our symptomatology.

Taking up any one of our remedies let us see in what manner we will examine its provings; here we have before us a mass of sensations more or less definitely expressing an idea, or defining something felt, that is, the substance as it were, of what each mind endeavours to make known to another.

Before proceeding to their minute consideration let us for a moment glance at the attributes of these symptoms, their properties if you please: each one represents either an exaltation or depression of function, a tonicity or heightened reflex action, or a relaxation or lowered action; then again every remedy as a whole, reacts to either heat or cold, hence we say certain classes of remedies show great sensitiveness to these agents. These then are the two grand divisions into which we may throw all drugs; a group representing exaltation of function may be headed by Nux. vom. another showing depression by Ant. T.: The Natrums are as intolerant of heat as most of the Potashes are of cold.

Proceeding a step further, we note the organ or combination of organs evolving the symptom group and from which all other symptoms seem to emanate; this gives a definite schema in which to arrange the symptoms and may be diagrammatically shown thus:

GENERALITIES	{	Exaltation.	
		Depression.	
MODALITIES	{	Temperature.	{ Heat.
		Circumstances.	
LOCALITY	{	Organ or	
		Combined Organs.	
SENSATIONS	{	General.	
		Localized.	

Now let us take a concrete example of the manner in which this works out.

The patient is before us. The first point is an objective one; i.e., does he exhibit a state of exaltation or depression? Next, is he sensitive to heat or cold? Under what circumstances have his symptoms appeared? What organ or combination of organs is affected? And lastly what are his particular symptoms?

It is almost needless to say that we will have arrived at -a more or less definite idea as to his remedy long before asking the last question. We will have associated a certain group of remedies in our mind long before asking the patient for a single symptom, and although it may occasionally happen that his remedy is not contained in this group, still it will surely be found among its congeners.

## DISCUSSION

**H. C. Allen M.D.:** A good many years ago Horace Greeley made some practical observations upon the resumption of specie payments, and he said that "the way to resume was to resume." The way to study materia medica is to study it. The way to teach it is to teach it. The trouble is we sit down and read the proving of a remedy or several chapters of the Organon and think that we have studied something, when we should know that reading is not study. If we can remember the time when we tackled algebra or geometry or German we will remember that we had to do more than merely read it before we mastered it. No man can learn anything without study. The facts of the materia medica are there and can be mastered only by study and we must each do it in our individual method of work. It can not be delegated to another. This way is Dr. Boger's way of mastering the subject. I do not think that it would do for me or help me a particle. Study it your own way, but to study it some way is the main thing.

Discussion closed.