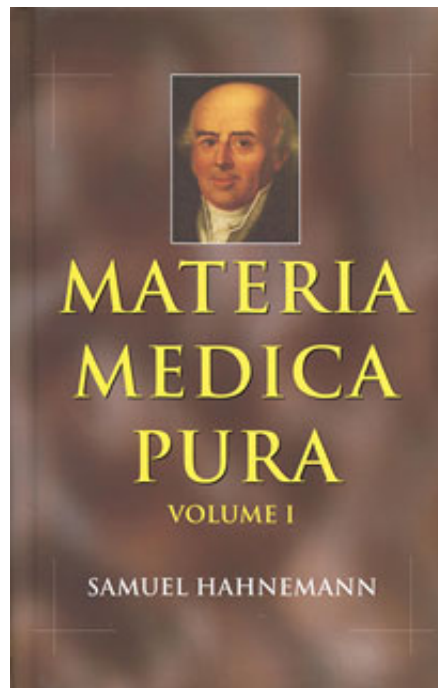


Samuel Hahnemann Materia Medica Pura

Reading excerpt

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BELLADONNA

(*Atropa Belladonna*).

(The freshly expressed juice of the whole plant at the commencement of its flowering, mixed with equal parts of alcohol.)

The plant gathered in the garden (on a rather dry soil and preferably on the slope of a hill) is little if at all inferior in medicinal power to the wild plant, although some physicians have asserted the contrary.

From the following completed list of the symptoms of belladonna it will readily be seen that it corresponds in similarity to a number of morbid states not unfrequently met with in life, and that hence it must frequently be homoeopathically applicable for curative purposes, like a polychrest.

Those small-souled persons who cry out against its poisonous character must let a number of patients die for want of belladonna, and their hackneyed phrase, that we have well-tried mild remedies for these diseases, only serves to prove their ignorance, for no medicine can be a substitute for another.

To take an example, how often are the worst forms of sore-throat (especially those combined with external swelling) given over to death, in spite of all their employment of venesection, leeches, blisters, gargles, emollient poultices, cooling powders, sudorifics and purgatives. And yet, without all these tortures, they might have been cured in a few hours with a single minute dose of belladonna.

And what other real medicine would not be hurtful, dangerous, and poisonous in the hands of the ignorant? Certainly every powerful medicine would be so if given in unsuitable cases of disease and in disproportionately large doses—for which the so-called physician would be solely to blame. On the other hand, the most potent and energetic medicines will become the mildest by diminishing the dose sufficiently, and they will become the most curative, even for the most delicate and sensitive bodies, when they are given in appropriate smallest possible doses, and when the case of disease consists of affections very similar to what the medicine itself has shown it can call forth in healthy human beings. With such potent drugs as belladonna, we must never neglect to exercise the requisite care in the homoeopathic selection. But this would never enter the head of the routine practitioner who, as is well known, is in the habit of treating all cases with a few prescriptions learned by rote.

Taught by a hundredfold experience at the sick bed during the last eight or ten years, I could not help descending to the decillion-fold

1 From vol. i, 3rd edit., 1830.

dilution, and I find the smallest portion of a drop* of this for a dose quite sufficient to fulfil every curative intention attainable with this medicine.

Two drops of the juice mixed with equal parts of alcohol, taken as unity (as with other vegetable juices), and shaken with 99 to 100 drops of alcohol by two downward strokes of the arm (whose hand holds the mixing phial) gives a hundredfold potentized dilution ; one drop of this shaken in the same way with another 100 drops of fresh alcohol gives the ten-thousandfold dilution, and one drop of this shaken with 100 drops of alcohol, the millionfold. And thus in thirty such phials the potentized dilution is brought to the decillionfold, with which the homoeopathic physician effects the cures he can expect to make with belladonna.

(The above is the method to be employed for the dilution and potentization of the other vegetable juices.)

Belladonna, in the small dose just described, is, if the case is homoeopathically adapted, capable of curing the most acute diseases (in which it acts with a rapidity proportionate to the nature of the disorder). On the other hand, it is not less serviceable in the most chronic ailments, in which its duration of action, even in the smallest dose, amounts to three weeks and more.

Almost all authors have asserted that vinegar is an antidote to belladonna, but that is a mere conjecture, copied in simple faith by one from another, and yet nothing is further from the truth. Repeated experience has taught me that vinegar only aggravates the ill-effects of large doses of belladonna.

Opium relieves the paralytic symptoms and abdominal pains caused by belladonna, but only in an antipathic and palliative way, very probably also it removes, in very small doses, the sopor caused by belladonna.

But the stupefied condition, the mania and the fury caused by belladonna, are soonest and most surely homoeopathically removed by one or two small doses of *henbane*. But the intoxication by itself is best subdued by *wine*, as I have seen, and as THAJUS and MOIBANUS long ago observed.

When small dose of belladonna, unhomoeopathically selected, causes lachrymose disposition with chilliness and headache, an equally small dose of *pulsatilla* relieves.

But suitable help is most urgently required in cases where belladonna has been swallowed in considerable quantities, for example, in the form of its berries. In such cases relief is obtained by drinking a large quantity of strong coffee, which removes the loss of irritability and the tetanic convulsions, though it only does that antipathically. It also

* As the dose is one globule the size of a poppy seed (300 of which weigh only a grain), moistened with it, we give less than $\frac{1}{1000}$ of a drop of the decillion-fold medicinal dilution spiritualized (potentized) by succussion, for with a single drop many more than 1000 such small globules can be moistened.

† The best preventive of hydrophobia is the smallest dose of belladonna, given at first every third or fourth day, and repeated at ever longer intervals.

‡ STAFF also observed that in the violent headache from belladonna vinegar laid on the forehead increased it to such an intolerable degree that it had to be taken off.

promotes the vomiting of the berries most certainly, the fauces being at the same time irritated with a long feather in order to empty the stomach.

The erysipelatous swelling caused by belladonna are readily removed by hepar sulphuris. Camphor, too, displays much antidotal power against some of the morbid effects caused by belladonna.

The prophylactic power of belladonna (given in the smallest dose every six or seven days) discovered by me, against the true erysipelatoid smooth scarlet fever, as described by SYDENHAM, PLENCITZ, and others, was calumniated and ridiculed for nineteen years by a large number of medical men, who were not acquainted with this peculiar form of children's disease, and consequently mistook for it the *red miliary* (purpura miliaris, roodvonk*) that came from Belgium in 1801. This they falsely called "scarlet fever," and naturally they failed to get any result from the administration of my prophylactic and curative remedy for true scarlet fever, in this red miliary fever. I am happy to say that of late years other medical men have again observed the old true scarlet fever. They have amply testified to the prophylactic power of belladonna in this disease, and have at last rendered me justice after having been treated so long with unmerited contempt.

* See THOMASSEN A THUESINK, "Over de Roodvonk," 1816, extracted from his *Geneeskundige Waarnemingen*

† This red miliary (roodvonk) is quite a different disease, requiring quite different treatment. Belladonna naturally does no good in it, and the ordinary routine practice allows the majority of patients to die of it. These might be all cured by the alternate administration of aconite and tincture of raw coffee—the former for the heat and increasing restlessness and agonizing anxiety, the latter for the excessive pains with the lachrymose humour. The aconite should be given in the decillion-fold dilution of the juice, and the raw coffee in the million-fold dilution; both in the smallest portion of a drop for a dose, the one or the other, according as they are indicated, given every twelve, sixteen, or twenty-four hours. In recent times these two very different diseases (smooth scarlet fever and purple miliary) seem to have occurred complicated with one another in some epidemics; hence in some of the patients belladonna, in others aconite, seemed to have been most useful.

[HAHNEMANN was aided in his proving of belladonna by the under-mentioned disciples:—BAEHB, GAOSS, HAKTMANN, HABTUNG, C. HBMPBL, HHBBMANN, HORNBURG, KOMMEB, LANGHAMMEB, J. G. LBHMANN, MOCKEL, L. B-ROCKEBT, STAFF, WISLIONUS.

Symptoms have been taken from the following old-school authorities: AOKERMANN, in *Struve's Triumph d. Heilk.*, iii. *Acta Nat. Cur.*, vol. ix. ALBREOHT, in *Commerc. lit. Nor.*, 1731.

BALDINGER, in *Neues Magazin f. Aerzte*, i. BAYLIE, *Prao. Essays on Med. Subjects*. BODCSBB, in *Journ. de Med.*, xi, Aout. BOCHAVE, in *Samml. br. Abh., f. pr. Aerzte*, xiv. BUCHHOLZ, in *Hufei- Journ.*, \. BDC'HOZ, in *Vicat, Plantes Venen. de la Suisse*. CAMEBABIDS, EL., *Obs-; Med.-Chir. Wahrnehm.*, vii; and in *Wepfer, Hist.*

CIC. GAEL, in *Act. Nat. Cur.*, vol. iv. *Commercium littr, Nor.*, 1731. GULLEN, *Mat. Med.*, ii.

DABIES, *Diss. de Belladonna*, Lips., 1776. DILLBNIUS, in *Misc. Nat. Cur.*, Deo. iii, ann. 7, 8. DOMOULIN, in *Journ. de Med.*, xi, Aout.

- EHRHARDT, *Pflanzenhistorie*, x. ELFES, in *Bust's Magazin*, vol. xxi.
 EVERS, in *Berliner Samml.*, iv. EVERS, in *Schmucker's Vermischten Schriften*, i.
- FABER, *Strychnomania*-
 G—CH, in *Hufel. Journ.*, xxii. GMEHN, EB, in *Acta Nat. Cur.*, vol. vi, app. ;
Pftanzengifte. GOCKBL, in *Ftankische Samml.*, iii. GREDING, in
Ludwigti Adversaria med. GRIMM, in *Act. Nat. Cur.*, vol. ii.
- HASENEST, in *Act. Nat. Cur.*, vol. iii. HENNING, in *Hufel. Journ.*, xxi.
 HOCHSTETTEB, *Obs. Med.*, Eft., 1674. HOFFMANN, PR., *Medicma*
Ration. HORST, *Opera*, ii. HOYER, in *Misc. Nat. Cur.*, Dec. iii, ann. 7, 8.
Hufeland' & Journal f. pr. Arzn. xvi.
- JUSTI, in *Hufeland's Journ.*, vii.
- LAMBERGEN, TIB., *Lectio inaug. sist. eph. pers. carcin.*, Groning., 1754.
 LAUNAY D'HRMONT, DE, in *Hist. de l' Acad. des So.* LOTTINGER,
Med.-Chir. Wahrnehm., Altenb., ii.
- MANETTI, *Viridarium florentinum*, Florent., 1751. MAPPI, *Plant. Alsat.*
 MARDORF, *Diss. tie Mamacis Giessensibus*, Giesae, 1691. MAY, in
Hannover. Mag., 1773, No. 97. *Med.-Chir. Wahrnehmungun aus ver-*
schiednen Sprachen ubersetzt, Altenb., vii. MEZA, DTM, in *Samml. br.*
Abh. f. pr. Aerzte, xiv. MOIBANUS, in *Schenck*, vii. MDLLER, in *Horn's*
Archiv. ix. MoNCH, *Ueber die Belladonne*. MUNCH, in *Rtchter's*
Btbliothek, v.
- OLLENROTH, in *Hufel. Journ.*, vii.
- POKTA, J. B. *Magia Natur.*, viii.
- BAU, in *Act. Nat. Cur.*, vol. x. BAY, *Histor. Plant.*, lib. 13. BBMER, in
Hufel. Journ., xvii.
- Si. MARTIN, DE, in *Journ. de Med*, xviii Aout. SAUTER, in *Hufel. Journ.*,
 xi. SADVAGES, *Nosol.*, ii, SchAhFEi., in *Uufel. Journ.*, vi. SOHMU-CKER,
Chirurg- Wahrnehm., ii ; *Vermischten Schriften*. SCHRECK, in *Comme.ro.*
lit. Nor. 1743- SiCELIus, *Observ-*, Dec. iv. SOLENANDEH, in *Abh. der*
Konigl. Acad. d. Wissensch., Breslau, 1750. STRUVB, *Triumph der*
Heilk., i.
- TIMMERMANN, *Diss- Periculum Bdladonnce*.
- VALENTINI, in *Misc. Nat. Cur.*, Dec. ii, ann. 10. VICAT, *Plantes Venene-*
uses de la Suisse.
- WAGNER, *Misc. Nat. Cur.*, Dec. ii, ann- 10. WARE, JAMES, in *Gilbert's*
Annals, 1816, xi. WASSBEBERG, in *Stall's Ratio Medendi*, iii. WEIN-
 MANN, in *Gmelin's Pftamengifte*. W[^]LLS, CHARLES, in *Gilbert's*
Annals, 1813, ii. WEIZLER, in *Annal. d. Heilkunde*, 1811, Feb.
 WIEDEMANN, in *Hufel. Journ.*, xxii. WIBNHOLT, *Heilkr. d. Thter.*
Magnetismus, i. WIERUS, *De praestig. Damonum*, iii.
- ZIEGLKR, *Beob.*, Lips., 1787.

In the *Fragmenta* there are 405 symptoms of belladonna, in the 1st Edit. 650, in the 2nd Edit. 1422, and in this 3rd Edit. 1440.]

BELLADONNA.

Vertigo. [SicELIUS,¹ *Observ.*, Dec. iv, Cas. 4.—ZIEGLER, * *Beob.*, Leipz., 1787, pp. 21—38.—R. BUCHAVE,² in *Samml. br. Abh. f. pr. Aerzte*, xiv, iv.—HENNING,³ in *Hufel. Journ.*, xxi, i.—EB. GMELIN,* in *Ada. Nat. Cur.*, vi, App.]

Vertigo ; objects seem to sway hither and thither. [PFs.]

Whirling in the head, vertigo with nausea, as after rapid turning round in a circle, or as after the morning sleep following a nocturnal debauch. [Hf>?.]

Whirling in the head, and at the same time a similar whirling in the pit of the stomach ; after rising it became so bad when walking, that she could not distinguish anything, everything vanished from her sight. [Kr. ^]

5- Vertigo as if all whirled round in a circle (aft. 1 h.). [ffrr.]

He goes round in a circle. [DE ST. MARTIN,⁵ *Journal de Med.*, xviii, Aout]

Stupid and whirling in the head ; she feels better in the open air, worse in the room (aft. 1 h.). [Si/¹.]

Attacks of vertigo, when at rest and when moving. [Gss.]

A giddy feeling in the whole head, like vertigo, when sitting. [ffift.]

10. Vertigo and trembling of the hands, so that she could not do anything with them. [BALDINGER, ^c *Neues Magazin f. Aerzte*, i, I St., p. 30.]

When walking he staggers, holds on to the walls, complains of anxiety and vertigo, and often talks nonsense like a drunken person. [BALDINGER, l. c.]

She rises from bed in the morning and staggers as if intoxicated, hither and thither. [GREDING. in *Ludwigii Adversar. med. pr.*, i, P. iv, p. 670⁷ (14).]

Giddy swaying. [MARDORF, ^s *Diss. de Maniacis Giessensibus*, Giesas, 1691.—LOTTINGER,⁹ *Med. Chirurg. Wahrthm.*, Altenb., ii, p. 326.—Tib. LAMBERGEN,¹⁰ *Lectio inattg. sist. eph. pers. carcin.*, Groning., 1754.]

1 Not accessible.

2 Symptoms observed in whooping-cough patients to whom large doses of the extract had been administered.

3 Effects of grain doses of powdered leaves given for pemphigus.

4 Poisoning of an old man by the berries. [When the form in which the plant was taken is not mentioned, it will be understood that the berries were ingested.]

5 Poisoning of a boy of four.

6 Poisoning of four adults.

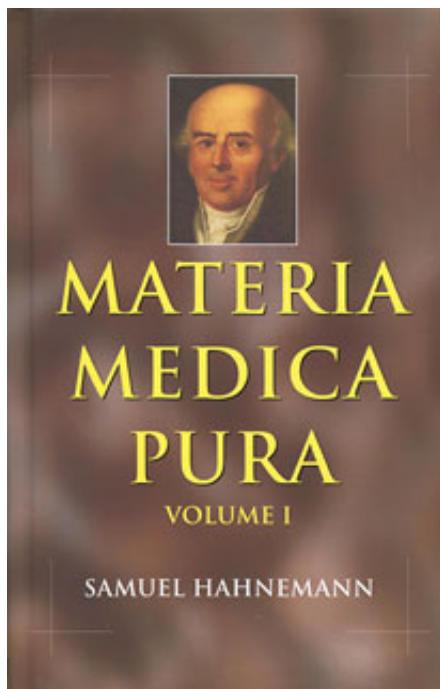
7 Greding's symptoms from vol. i of Ludwig's *Adversaria* are taken from a series of twenty-three cases, of which the first thirteen/were pure epileptics and the remainder epilepto-maniacs, treated by belladonna in increasing doses of the powdered leaves. As all mental symptoms occurring in the patients of the second category must, be esteemed doubtful, I have indicated them by adding to each the number of the case from which they were taken.

8 Poisoning of several persons.

9 Not accessible.

10 Symptoms observed in a patient taking an infusion of Belladonna for some mammary indurations.

- Attacks of vertigo with obtuseness of senses for some minutes (aft. 12 h.).
15. All day long confusion of senses; he knows not what he is doing. [2>.]
 Obtuseness of senses.
 Cloudiness of the head, with swelling of the glands in the nape (aft. 6h.).
 Intoxication.
 Immediately after a meal as if intoxicated.
20. On drinking the smallest quantity of beer immediate intoxication.
 Muddled head and intoxication as if from drinking wine, with bloated red face. [*Commercium liter. Nor.*, ¹ 1731.]
 His whole head is dazed for many days. [Si/.]
 Muddled state as in intoxication. [HOCHSTETTER,³ *Obs. Med.*, Fft., 1674, obs. 7.—MAY,³ in *Hannover. Mag.*, 1773, No. 97.—SICELIUS, 1. c.—DE LAUNAY D'HERMONT, * in *Hist. de V Acad. des Sc.*, 1756—ALBRECHT,⁵ in *Commerc. lit. Nor.*, 1731.—BUC'HOZ," in *Vioat, Plantes venen. de la Suisse*, p. 183.] [*L. Bkt.*~]
 Muddled state of sinciput as if an oppressive fog went hither and thither, especially under the frontal bone. [Gss.]
25. Muddling of the head as from much brandy and tobacco smoke. [*Hbo.1*
 Muddling and confusion of the whole head, as from the disagreeable feeling of commencing intoxication. [Gss.]
 Confusion of the head ; worse during movement. [*Hrr.*]
 Disinclination for all intellectual work. _Bbg.} Weakness of mind and body. [Hrr.]
30. Weakness of mind. [WiERUs,⁷ *de Praestig- Ddmonum*, iii, cap. 17.J
 Stupefaction. [WAGNER,⁸ *Miscell. Nat. Cur.*, Dec. ii, ann. 10, obs. 108 (ID—BUCHAVE—WIERUS, 1. c.)
 Confusion of mind, [SICELIUS, 1.e.]
 Confusion of mind, so that he knows not whether he is dreaming or awake. [MomANUs, ° in *Schenck*, vii, obs. 164.]
 Confusion of the senses ; sleepy and yet awake, he thinks he is dreaming, [MOIBANUS, 1. c.]
35. His senses deceive him, [AcKERMANN,¹⁰ in *Struve, Triumph der H.*, iii, p. 303.]
 Same as Albrcht, q. v. Effects of infusion in an adult. Not accessible.
- 4 Poisoning of an adult.
 5 Poisoning of two women and a boy,
 6 Poisoning of a young boy.
 7 Poisoning of an adult.
 8 Poisoning of (1) two old women and (11) some children. [Thes« numbers will be used to designate the subjects to whom the symptoms belong.]
 it Poisoning of a man. 10
 Not accessible.



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