

**Hermetic Pharmacology Chemistry and Therapeutics**

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**HERMETIC PHARMACOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, AND THERAPEUTICS  
The healing methods of Paracelsus--Palingenesis--Hermetic theories concerning the cause of disease--Medicinal properties of herbs--The use of drugs in the Mysteries--The sect of the Assassins.**

THE art of healing was originally one of the secret sciences of the priestcraft, and the mystery of its source is obscured by the same veil which hides the genesis of religious belief. All higher forms of knowledge were originally in the possession of the sacerdotal castes. The temple was the cradle of civilization. The priests, exercising their divine prerogative, made the laws and enforced them; appointed the rulers and controlled than; ministered to the needs of the living, and guided the destinies of the dead. All branches of learning were monopolized by the priesthood, who admitted into their ranks only those intellectually and morally qualified to perpetuate their arcanum. The following quotation from Plato's *Statesman* is apropos of the subject: " \* \* \* in Egypt, the King himself is not allowed to reign, unless he have priestly powers; and if he should be one of another class, and have obtained the throne by violence, he must get enrolled in the priestcraft."

Candidates aspiring to membership in the religious orders underwent severe tests to prove their worthiness. These ordeals were called *initiations*. Those who passed them successfully were welcomed as *brothers* by the priests and were instructed in the secret teachings. Among the ancients, philosophy, science, and religion were never considered as separate units: each was regarded as an integral part of the whole. Philosophy was scientific and religious; science was philosophic and religious I religion was philosophic and scientific. Perfect wisdom was considered unattainable save as the result of harmonizing all three of these expressions of mental and moral activity.

While modern physicians accredit Hippocrates with being the father of medicine, the ancient *therapeutæ* ascribed to the immortal Hermes the distinction of being the founder of the art of healing. Clemens Alexandrinus, in describing the books purported to be from the stylus of Hermes, divided the sacred writings into six general classifications, one of which, the *Pastophorus*, was devoted to the science of medicine. The *Smaragdine*, or Emerald Tablet found in the valley of Ebron and generally accredited to Hermes, is in reality a chemical formula of a high and secret order.

Hippocrates, the famous Greek physician, during the fifth century before Christ, dissociated the healing art from the other sciences of the temple and thereby established a precedent for separateness. One of the consequences is the present widespread crass scientific materialism. The ancients realized the interdependence of the sciences. The moderns do not; and as a result, incomplete systems of learning are attempting to maintain isolated individualism. The obstacles which confront present-day scientific research are largely the result of prejudicial limitations imposed by those who are unwilling to accept that which transcends the concrete perceptions of the five primary human senses.

**THE PARACELSIAN SYSTEM OF MEDICAL PHILOSOPHY**

During the Middle Ages the long-ignored axioms and formulæ of Hermetic wisdom were assembled once more, and chronicled, and systematic attempts were made to test their accuracy. To Theophrastus of Hohenheim, who called himself *Paracelsus* (a name meaning "greater than Celsus"), the world is indebted for much of the knowledge it now possesses of the ancient systems of medicine. Paracelsus devoted his entire life to the study and exposition of Hermetic philosophy. Every notion and theory was grist to his mill, and, while members of the medical fraternity belittle his memory now as they opposed his system then, the occult world knows that he will yet be recognized as the greatest physician of all times. While the heterodox and exotic temperament of Paracelsus has been held against him by his enemies, and his wanderlust has been called vagabondage, he was one of the few minds who intelligently sought to reconcile the art of healing with the philosophic and religious systems of paganism and Christianity.

In defending his right to seek knowledge in all parts of the earth, and among all classes of society, Paracelsus wrote: "Therefore I consider that it is for me a matter of praise, not of blame, that I have hitherto and worthily pursued my wanderings. For this will I bear witness respecting nature: he who will investigate her ways must travel her books with his feet. That which is written is investigated through its letters, but nature from land to land-as often a land so often a leaf. Thus is the Codex of Nature, thus must its leaves be turned." (*Paracelsus*, by John Maxson Stillman.)

Paracelsus was a great observationalist, and those who knew him best have called him "The Second Hermes" and "The Trismegistus of Switzerland." He traveled Europe from end to end, and may have penetrated Eastern lands while running down superstitions and ferreting out supposedly lost doctrines. From the gypsies he learned much concerning the uses of simples, and apparently from the Arabians concerning the making of talismans and the influences of the heavenly bodies. Paracelsus felt that the healing of the sick was of far greater importance than the maintaining of an orthodox medical standing, so he sacrificed what might otherwise have been a dignified medical career and at the cost of lifelong persecution bitterly attacked the therapeutic systems of his day.

Uppermost in his mind was the hypothesis that everything in the universe is good for something--which accounts for his cutting fungus from tombstones and collecting dew on glass plates at midnight. He was a true explorer of Nature's arcanum. Many authorities have held the opinion that he was the discoverer of mesmerism, and that Mesmer evolved the art as the result of studying the writings of this great Swiss physician.

The utter contempt which Paracelsus felt for the narrow systems of medicine in vogue during his lifetime, and his conviction of their inadequacy, are best expressed in his own quaint way: "But the number of diseases that originate from some unknown causes is far greater than those that come from mechanical causes, and for such diseases our physicians know no cure because not knowing such causes they cannot remove them. All they can prudently do is to observe the patient and make their guesses about his condition; and the patient may rest satisfied if the medicines administered to him do no serious harm, and do not prevent his recovery. The best of our popular physicians are the ones that do least harm. But, unfortunately, some poison their patients with mercury, others purge them or bleed them to death. There are some who have learned so much that their learning has driven out all their common sense, and a there are others who care a great: deal more for their own profit than for the health of their patients. A disease does not change its state to accommodate itself to the knowledge of the physician, but the physician should understand the causes of the disease. A physician should be a servant of Nature, and not her enemy; he should be able to guide and direct her in her struggle for life and not throw, by his unreasonable interference, fresh obstacles in the way of recovery." (From the *Paragranum*, translated by Franz Hartmann.)

The belief that nearly all diseases have their origin in the invisible nature of man (the Astrum) is a fundamental precept of Hermetic medicine, for while Hermetists in no way disregarded the physical body, they believed that man's material constitution was an emanation from, or an objectification of, his invisible spiritual principles. A brief, but it is believed fairly comprehensive, résumé of the Hermetic principles of Paracelsus follows.

  
THE TITLE PAGE OF THE BOOK OF ALZE.

From *Musæum Hermeticum Reformatum et Amplificatum*.

*This title page is a further example of Hermetic and alchemical symbolism. The seven-pointed star of the sacred metals is arranged that one black point is downward, thus symbolizing Saturn, the Destroyer. Beginning in the space immediately to the left of the black point, reading clockwise discloses the cryptic word VITRIOL formed by the capital letters of the seven Latin words in the outer circle.*

There is one vital substance in Nature upon which all things subsist. It is called *archæus*, or *vital life force*, and is synonymous with the astral light or spiritual air of the ancients. In regard to this substance, Eliphas Levi has written: "Light, that creative agent, the vibrations of which are the movement and life of all things; light, latent in the universal ether, radiating about absorbing centres, which, being saturated thereby, project movement and life in their turn, so forming creative currents; light, astralized in the stars, animalized in animals, humanized in human beings; light, which vegetates all plants, glistens in metals, produces all forms of Nature and equilibrates all by the laws of universal sympathy--this is the light which exhibits the phenomena of magnetism, divined by Paracelsus, which tinctures the blood, being released from the air as it is inhaled and discharged by the hermetic bellows of the lungs." (*The History of Magic*.)

This vital energy has its origin in the spiritual body of the earth. Every created thing has two bodies, one visible and substantial, the other invisible and transcendent. The latter consists of an ethereal counterpart of the physical form; it constitutes the vehicle of *archæus*, and may be called a *vital body*. This etheric *shadow sheath* is not dissipated by death, but remains until the physical form is entirely disintegrated. These "etheric doubles, "seen around graveyards, have given rise to a belief in ghosts. Being much finer in its substances than the earthly body, the etheric double is far more susceptible to impulses and inharmonies. It is derangements of this astral light body that cause much disease. Paracelsus taught that a person with a morbid mental attitude could poison his own etheric nature, and this infection, diverting the natural flow of *vital life force*, would later appear as a physical ailment. All plants and minerals have an invisible nature composed of this "archæus," but each manifests it in a different way.

Concerning the astral-light bodies of flowers, James Gaffarel, in 1650, wrote the following: "I answer, that though they be chopt in pieces, brayed in a Mortar, and even burnt to Ashes; yet do they neverthelesse retaine, (by a certaine Secret, and wonderfull Power of Nature), both in the Juyce, and in the Ashes, the selfe same Forme, and Figure, that they had before: and though it be not there Visible, yet it may by Art be drawne forth, and made Visible to the Eye, by an Artist. This perhaps will seem a Ridiculous story to those, who reade only the Titles of Bookes: but, those that please, may see this truth confirmed, if they but have recourse to the Workes of M. du Chesne, S. de la Violette, one of the best Chymists that our Age hath produced; who affirmes, that himselfe saw an Excellent Polich Physician of Cracovia, who kept, in Glasses, the Ashes of almost all the Hearbs that are knowne: so that, when any one, out of Curiosity, had a desire to see any of them, as (for example) a Rose, in one of his Glasses, he tooke That where the Ashes of a Rose were preserved; and holding it over a lighted Candle, so soone as it ever began to feele the Heat, you should presently see the Ashes begin to Move; which afterwards rising up, and dispersing themselves about the Glasse, you should immediately observe a kind of little Dark Cloud; which dividing it selfe into many parts, it came at length to represent a Rose; but so Faire, so Fresh, and so Perfect a one, that you would have thought it to have been as Substancial, & as Odoriferous a Rose, as growes on the Rose-tree." (*Unheard-of Curiosities Concerning Talismanical Sculpture of the Persians*.)

Paracelsus, recognizing derangements of the etheric double as the most important cause of disease, sought to reharmonize its substances by bringing into contact with it other bodies whose vital energy could supply elements needed, or were strong enough to overcome the diseased conditions existing in the aura of the sufferer. Its invisible cause having been thus removed, the ailment speedily vanished.

The vehicle for the *archæus*, or vital life force, Paracelsus called the *mumia*. A good example of a physical mumia is vaccine, which is the vehicle of a semi-astral virus. Anything which serves as a medium for the transmission of the archæus, whether it be organic or inorganic, truly physical or partly spiritualized, was termed a mumia. The most universal form of the mumia was ether, which modern science has accepted as a hypothetical substance serving as a medium between the realm of vital energy and that of organic and inorganic substance.

The control of universal energy is virtually impossible, save through one of its vehicles (the mumia). A good example of this is food. Man does not secure nourishment from dead animal or plant organisms, but when he incorporates their structures into his own body he first gains control over the mumia, or etheric double, of the animal or plant. Having obtained this control, the human organism then diverts the flow of the archæus to its own uses. Paracelsus says: "That which constitutes life is contained in the Mumia, and by imparting the Mumia we impart life." This is the secret of the remedial properties of talismans and amulets, for the mumia of the substances of which they are composed serves as a channel to connect the person wearing them with certain manifestations of the universal vital life force.

According to Paracelsus, in the same way that plants purify the atmosphere by accepting into their constitutions the carbon dioxid exhaled by animals and humans, so may plants and animals accept disease elements transferred to them by human beings. These lower forms of life, having organisms and needs different from man, are often able to assimilate these substances without ill effect. At other times, the plant or animal dies, sacrificed in order that the more intelligent, and consequently more useful, creature may survive. Paracelsus discovered that in either case the patient was gradually relieved of his malady. When the lower life had either completely assimilated the foreign mumia from the patient, or had itself died and disintegrated as the result of its inability to do so, complete recovery resulted. Many years of investigation were necessary to determine which herb or animal most readily accepted the mumia of each of various diseases.

Paracelsus discovered that in many cases plants revealed by their shape the particular organs of the human body which they served most effectively. The medical system of Paracelsus was based on the theory that by removing the diseased etheric mumia from the organism of the patient and causing it to be accepted into the nature of some distant and disinterested thing of comparatively little value, it was possible to divert from the patient the flow of the archæus which had been continually revitalizing and nourishing the malady. Its vehicle of expression being transplanted, the archæus necessarily accompanied its mumia, and the patient recovered.

**THE HERMETIC THEORY CONCERNING THE CAUSATIONS OF DISEASE**

According to the Hermetic philosophers, there were seven primary causes of disease. The first was *evil spirits*. These were regarded as creatures born of degenerate actions, subsisting on the vital energies of those to whom they attached themselves. The second cause was a *derangement of the spiritual nature and the material nature*: these two, failing to coordinate, produced mental and physical subnormality. The third was an *unhealthy or abnormal mental attitude*. Melancholia, morbid emotions, excess of feeling, such as passions, lusts, greeds, and hates, affected the mumia, from which they reacted into the physical body, where they resulted in ulcers, tumors, cancers, fevers, and tuberculosis. The ancients viewed the disease germ as a unit of mumia which had been impregnated with the emanations from evil influences which it had contacted. In other words, germs were minute creatures born out of man's evil thoughts and actions.

  
JOHANNIS BAPTISTAE VON HELMONT.

From von Helmont's *Ausgang der Artznen-Kunst*.

*At the beginning of the seventeenth century von Helmont, the Belgian alchemist (to whom incidentally, the world is indebted for the common term gas, as distinguished from other kinds of air), while experimenting with the root of A---, touched it to the tip of his tongue, without swallowing any of the substance. He himself describes the result in the following manner:*

*"Immediately my head seemed tied tightly with a string, and soon after there happened to me a singular circumstance such as I had never before experienced. I observed with astonishment that I no longer felt and thought with the head, but with the region of the stomach, as if consciousness had now taken up its seat in the stomach. Terrified by this unusual phenomenon, I asked myself and inquired into myself carefully; but I only became the more convinced that my power of perception was became greater and more comprehensive. This intellectual clearness was associated with great pleasure. I did not sleep, nor did I dream; I was perfectly sober; and my health was perfect. I had occasionally had ecstasies, but these had nothing in common with this condition of the stomach, in which it thought and felt, and almost excluded all cooperation of the head. In the meantime my friends were troubled with the fear that I might go mad. But my faith to God, and my submission to His will, soon dissipated this fear. This state continued for two hours, after which I had same dizziness. I afterwards frequently tasted of the A---, but I never again could reproduce these sensations." (Van Helmont, Demens idea. Reprinted by P. Davidson in The Mistletoe and Its Philosophy.)*

*Von Helmont is only one of many who have accidentally hit upon the secrets of the early priestcrafts, but none in this age give evidence of an adequate comprehension of the ancient Hermetic secrets. From the description von Helmont gives, it is probable that the herb mentioned by him paralyzed temporarily the cerebrospinal nervous system, the result being that the consciousness was forced to function through the sympathetic nervous system and its brain--the solar plexus.*

The fourth cause of disease was what the Orientals called *Karma*, that is, the Law of Compensation, which demanded that the individual pay in full for the indiscretions and delinquencies of the past. A physician had to be very careful how he interfered with the workings of this law, lest he thwart the plan of Eternal justice. The fifth cause was the *motion and aspects of the heavenly bodies*. The stars did not compel the sickness but rather impelled it. The Hermetists taught that a strong and wise man ruled his stars, but that a negative, weak person was ruled by them. These five causes of disease are all superphysical in nature. They must be estimated by inductive and deductive reasoning and a careful consideration of the life and temperament of the patient.

The sixth cause of disease was a *misuse of faculty, organ, or function*, such as overstraining a member or overtaxing the nerves. The seventh cause was the *presence in the system of foreign substances, impurities, or obstructions*. Under this heading must be considered diet, air, sunlight, and the presence of foreign bodies. This list does not include accidental injuries; such do not belong under the heading of disease. Frequently they are methods by which the Law of Karma expresses itself.

According to the Hermetists, disease could be prevented or successfully combated in seven ways. First, by spells and invocations, in which the physician ordered the evil spirit causing the disease to depart from the patient. This procedure was probably based on the Biblical account of the man possessed of devils whom Jesus healed by commanding the devils to leave the man and enter into a herd of swine. Sometimes the evil spirits entered a patient at the bidding of someone desiring to injure him. In these cases the physician commanded the spirits to return to the one who sent them. It is recorded that in some instances the evil spirits departed through the mouth in the form of clouds of smoke; sometimes from the nostrils as flames. It is even averred that the spirits might depart in the form of birds and insects.

The second method of healing was by vibration. The inharmonies of the bodies were neutralized by chanting spells and intoning the sacred names or by playing upon musical instruments and singing. Sometimes articles of various colors were exposed to the sight of the sick, for the ancients recognized, at least in part, the principle of color therapeutics, now in the process of rediscovery.

The third method was with the aid of talismans, charms, and amulets. The ancients believed that the planets controlled the functions of the human body and that by making charms out of different metals they could combat the malignant influences of the various stars. Thus, a person who is anæmic lacks iron. Iron was believed to be under the control of Mars. Therefore, in order to bring the influence of Mars to the sufferer, around his neck was hung a talisman made of iron and bearing upon it certain secret instructions reputed to have the power of invoking the spirit of Mars. If there was too much iron in the system, the patient was subjected to the influence of a talisman composed of the metal corresponding to some planet having an antipathy to Mars. This influence would then offset the Mars energy and thus aid in restoring normality.

The fourth method was by the aid of herbs and simples. While they used metal talismans, the majority of the ancient physicians did not approve of mineral medicine in any form for internal use. Herbs were their favorite remedies. Like the metals, each herb was assigned to one of the planets. Having diagnosed by the stars the sickness and its cause, the doctors then administered the herbal antidote.

The fifth method of healing disease was by prayer. All ancient peoples believed in the compassionate intercession of the Deity for the alleviation of human suffering. Paracelsus said that faith would cure all disease. Few persons, however, possess a sufficient degree of faith.

The sixth method--which was prevention rather than cure--was regulation of the diet and daily habits of life. The individual, by avoiding the things which caused illness, remained well. The ancients believed that health was the normal state of man; disease was the result of man's disregard of the dictates of Nature.

The seventh method was "practical medicine," consisting chiefly of bleeding, purging, and similar lines of treatment. These procedures, while useful in moderation, were dangerous in excess. Many a useful citizen has died twenty-five or fifty years before his time as the result of drastic purging or of having all the blood drained out of his body.

Paracelsus used all seven methods of treatment, and even his worst enemies admitted that he accomplished results almost miraculous in character. Near his old estate in Hohenheim, the dew falls very heavily at certain seasons of the year, and Paracelsus discovered that by gathering the dew under certain configurations of the planets he obtained a water possessing marvelous medicinal virtue, for it had absorbed the properties of the heavenly bodies.

**HERMETIC HERBALISM AND PHARMACOLOGY**

The herbs of the fields were sacred to the early pagans, who believed that the gods had made plants for the cure of human ills. When properly prepared and applied, each root and shrub could be used for the alleviation of suffering, or for the development of spiritual, mental, moral, or physical powers. In *The Mistletoe and Its Philosophy*, P. Davidson pays the following beautiful tribute to the plants: "Books have been written on the language of flowers and herbs, the poet from the earliest ages has held the sweetest and most loving converse with them, kings are even glad to obtain their essences at second hand to perfume themselves; but to the true physician--Nature's High-Priest--they speak in a far higher and more exalted strain. There is not a plant or mineral which has disclosed the last of its properties to the scientists. How can they feel confident that for every one of the discovered properties there may not be many powers concealed in the inner nature of the plant? Well have flowers been called the 'Stars of Earth,' and why should they not be beautiful? Have they not from the time of their birth smiled in the splendor of the sun by day, and slumbered under the brightness of the stars by night? Have they not come from another and more spiritual world to our earth, seeing that God made 'every plant of the field BEFORE it was in the earth, and every herb of the field BEFORE IT GREW'?"

Many primitive peoples used herbal remedies, with many remarkable cures. The Chinese, Egyptians, and American Indians cured with herbs diseases for which modern science knows no remedy. Doctor Nicholas Culpeper, whose useful life ended in 1654, was probably the most famous of herbalists. Finding that the medical systems of his day were unsatisfactory in the extreme, Culpeper turned his attention to the plants of the fields, and discovered a medium of healing which gained for him national renown.

In Doctor Culpeper's correlation of astrology and herbalism, each plant was under the jurisdiction of one of the planets or luminaries. He believed that disease was also controlled by celestial configurations. He summed up his system of treatment as follows: "You may oppose diseases by Herbs of the planet opposite to the planet that causes them: as diseases of Jupiter by Herbs of Mercury, and the contrary; diseases of the Luminaries by the Herbs of Saturn, and the contrary; diseases of Mars by Herbs of Venus and the contrary. \* \* \* There is a way to cure diseases sometimes by Sympathy, and so every planet cures his own disease; as the Sun and Moon by their Herbs cure the Eyes, Saturn the Spleen, Jupiter the Liver, Mars the Gall and diseases of choler, and Venus diseases in the Instruments of Generation." (*The Complete Herbal*.)

Mediæval European herbalists rediscovered only in part the ancient Hermetic secrets of Egypt and Greece. These earlier nations evolved the fundamentals of nearly all modern arcs and sciences. At that time the methods used in healing were among the secrets imparted to initiates of the Mysteries. Unctions, collyria, philters, and potions were concocted to the accompaniment of strange rites. The effectiveness of these medicines is a matter of historical record. Incenses and perfumes were also much used.

  
NICHOLAS CULPEPER.

From Culpeper's *Semeiotica Uranica*.

*This famous physician, herbalist, and astrologer spent the greater part of his useful life ranging the hills and forests of England and cataloguing literally hundreds of medicinal herbs. Condemning the unnatural methods of contemporaneous medicos, Culpeper wrote: "This not being pleasing, and less profitable tome, I consulted with my two brothers, DR. REASON and DR. EXPERIENCE, and took a voyage to visit my mother NATURE, by whose advice, together with the help of Dr. DILIGENCE, I at last obtained my desire; and, being warned by MR. HONESTY, a stranger in our days, to publish it to the world, I have done it." (From the Introduction to the 1835 Edition of The Complete Herbal.) Doctor Johnson said of Culpeper that he merited the gratitude of posterity.*

Barrett in his *Magus* describes the theory on which they worked, as follows: "For, because our spirit is the pure, subtil, lucid, airy and unctuous vapour of the blood, nothing, therefore, is better adapted for collyriums than the like vapours which are more suitable to our spirit in substance; for then, by reason of their likeness, they do more stir up, attract and transform the spirit."

Poisons were thoroughly studied, and in some communities extracts of deadly herbs were administered to persons sentenced to death--as in the case of Socrates. The infamous Borgias of Italy developed the art of poisoning to its highest degree. Unnumbered brilliant men and women were quietly and efficiently disposed of by the almost superhuman knowledge of chemistry which for many centuries was preserved in the Borgia family.

Egyptian priests discovered herb extracts by means of which temporary clairvoyance could be induced, and they made use of these during the initiatory rituals of their Mysteries. The drugs were sometimes mixed with the food given to candidates, and at other times were presented in the form of sacred potions, the nature of which was explained. Shortly after the drugs were administered to him, the neophyte was attacked by a spell of dizziness. He found himself floating through space, and while his physical body was absolutely insensible (being guarded by priests that no ill should befall it) the candidate passed through a number of weird experiences, which he was able to relate after regaining consciousness. In the light of present-day knowledge, it is difficult to appreciate an art so highly developed that by means of draughts, perfumes, and incenses any mental attitude desired could be induced almost instantaneously, yet such an art actually existed among the priestcraft of the early pagan world.

Concerning this subject, H. P. Blavatsky, the foremost occultist of the nineteenth century, has written: 'Plants also have like mystical properties in a most wonderful degree, and the secrets of the herbs of dreams and enchantments are only lost to European science, and useless to say, too, are unknown to it, except in a few marked instances, such as opium and hashish. Yet, the psychical effects of even these few upon the human system are regarded as evidences of a temporary mental disorder. The women of Thessaly and Epirus, the female hierophants of the rites of Sabazius, did not carry their secrets away with the downfall of their sanctuaries. They are still preserved, and those who are aware of the nature of Soma, know the properties of other plants as well." (*Isis Unveiled*.)

Herbal compounds were used to cause temporary clairvoyance in connection with the oracles, especially the one at Delphi. Words spoken while in these imposed trances were regarded as prophetic. Modem mediums, while under control as the result of partly self-imposed catalepsy, give messages somewhat similar to those of the ancient prophets, but in the majority of cases their results are far less accurate, for the soothsayers of today lack the knowledge of Nature's hidden forces.

The Mysteries taught that during the higher degrees of initiation the gods themselves took part in the instruction of candidates or at least were present, which was in itself a benediction. As the deities dwelt in the invisible worlds and came only in their spiritual bodies, it was impossible for the neophyte to cognize them without the assistance of drugs which stimulated the clairvoyant center of his consciousness (probably the pineal gland). Many initiates in the ancient Mysteries stated emphatically that they had conversed with the immortals, and had beheld the gods.

When the standards of the pagans became corrupted, a division took place in the Mysteries. The band of truly enlightened ones separated themselves from the rest and, preserving the most important of their secrets, vanished without leaving a trace. The rest slowly drifted, like rudderless ships, on the rocks of degeneracy and disintegration. Some of the less important of the secret formulæ fell into the hands of the profane, who perverted them--as in the case of the Bacchanalia, during which drugs were mixed with wine and became the real cause of the orgies.

In certain parts of the earth it was maintained that there were natural wells, springs, or fountains, in which the water (because of the minerals through which it coursed) was tinctured with sacred properties. Temples were often built near these spots, and in some cases natural caves which chanced to be in the vicinity were sanctified to some deity.

"The aspirants to initiation, and those who came to request prophetic dreams of the Gods, were prepared by a fast, more or less prolonged, after which they partook of meals expressly prepared; and also of mysterious drinks, such as the water of Lethe, and the water of Mnemosyne in the grotto of Trophonius; or of the Ciceion in the mysteries of the Eleusinia. Different drugs were easily mixed up with the meats or introduced into the drinks, according to the state of mind or body into which it was necessary to throw the recipient, and the nature of the visions he was desirous of procuring.'' (Salverte's *The Occult Sciences*.) The same author states that certain sects of early Christianity were accused of using drugs for the same general purposes as the pagans.

The sect of the Assassins, or the Yezidees as they are more generally known, demonstrated a rather interesting aspect of the drug problem. In the eleventh century this order, by capturing the fortress of Mount Alamont, established itself at Irak. Hassan Sabbah, the founder of the order, known as the "Old Man of the Mountain, " is suspected of having controlled his followers by the use of narcotics. Hassan made his followers believe that they were in Paradise, where they would be forever if they implicitly obeyed him while they were alive. De Quincey, in his *Confessions of an Opium Eater*, describes the peculiar psychological effects produced by this product of the poppy, and the use of a similar drug may have given rise to the idea of Paradise which filled the minds of the Yezidees.

The philosophers of all ages have taught that the visible universe was but a fractional part of the whole, and that by analogy the physical body of man is in reality the least important part of his composite constitution. Most of the medical systems of today almost entirely ignore the superphysical man. They pay but scant attention to causes, and concentrate their efforts on ameliorating effects. Paracelsus, noting the same proclivity on the part of physicians during his day, aptly remarked: "There is a great difference between the power that removes the invisible causes of disease, and which is Magic, and that which causes merely external effects [to] disappear, and which is Physic, Sorcery, and Quackery." (Translated by Franz Hartmann.)

Disease is unnatural, and is evidence that there is a maladjustment within or between organs or tissues. Permanent health cannot be regained until harmony is restored. The outstanding virtue of Hermetic medicine was its recognition of spiritual and psychophysical derangements as being largely responsible for the condition which is called physical disease. Suggestive therapy was used with marked success by the priest-physicians of the ancient world. Among the-American Indians, the *Shamans*--or "Medicine Men"--dispelled sickness with the aid of mysterious dances, invocations, and charms. The fact that in spite of their ignorance of modern methods of medical treatment these sorcerers effected innumerable cures, is well worthy of consideration.

The magic rituals used by the Egyptian priests for the curing of disease were based upon a highly developed comprehension of the complex workings of the human mind and its reactions upon the physical constitution. The Egyptian and Brahmin worlds undoubtedly understood the fundamental principle of vibrotherapeutics. By means of chants and mantras, which emphasized certain vowel and consonant sounds, they set up vibratory reactions which dispelled congestions and assisted Nature in reconstructing broken members and depleted organisms. They also applied their knowledge of the laws governing vibration to the spiritual constitution of man; by their intonings, they stimulated latent centers of consciousness and thereby vastly increased the sensitiveness of the subjective nature.

In the *Book of Coming Forth by Day*, many of the Egyptian secrets have been preserved to this generation. While this ancient scroll has been well translated, only a few understand the secret: significance of its magical passages. Oriental races have a keen realization of the dynamics of sound. They know that every spoken word has tremendous power and that by certain arrangements of words they can create vortices of force in the invisible universe about them and thereby profoundly influence physical substance. The *Sacred Word* by which the world was established, the *Lost Word* which Masonry is still seeking, and the threefold Divine Name symbolized by *A. U. M.*--the creative tone of the Hindus--all are indicative of the veneration accorded the principle of sound.

The so-called "new discoveries" of modern science are often only rediscoveries of secrets well known to the priests and philosophers of ancient pagandom. Man's inhumanity to man has resulted in the loss of records and formula: which, had they been preserved, would have solved many of the greatest problems of this civilization. With sword and firebrand, races obliterate the records of their predecessors, and then inevitably meet with an untimely fate for need of the very wisdom they have destroyed.

  
CHEMICAL SYLLABLES.

From De Monte-Snyders' *Metamorphosis Planetarum*.

*De Monte-Snyders declares that each of the above characters forms one syllables of a word having seven syllables, the word itself representing the materia prima, or first substance of the universe. As all substance is composed of seven powers combined according to certain cosmic laws, a great mystery is concealed within the sevenfold constitution of man, and the universe. Of the above seven characters, De Monte-Snyder writes:*

*Whoever wants to know the true name and character of the materia prima shall know that out of the combination of the above figures syllables are produced, and out of these the verbum significativum."*

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END