

# Alastair C. Gray

## Experience of Medicine 2

Leseprobe

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von [Alastair C. Gray](#)

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## INTRODUCTION TO VOL II

I started this proving manual, my second, with that quote taken from Encyclopaedia Homeopathica via the Transactions of the I. H. A., 1889 for a couple of reasons.

Firstly, it briefly makes mention of one of the remedies proven here; Cactus. But much more than that it's a great conversation. Secondly and more importantly it reveals through the fog of a century or more, some of the thoughts and conversations of the old masters. It's perhaps a too fertile imagination of mine but I can imagine Kent, Nash, Lippe and the others sitting round a table smoking cigars and listening to papers and drifting off to sleep and quietly deciding under their breath that their colleagues were idiots or geniuses - a bit like what happens at contemporary conferences. The third reason is that it highlights for me one of the reasons for bothering to do provings at all. Similar and Simillimum. Is *a* similar enough? Why do we need all these new remedies really? Before we had new remedies like Box Jellyfish and Plutonium we were using Arnica and Mercury and still muddling along just fine. It's an issue of refinement and accuracy. As Kent says, you can still do great work with an inadequate stock of medicines if you know the rules for prescribing in this way. They of course are layed out in the Organon of Medicine from aphorism 162 to 202 where Hahnemann gives us such clear practical instructions in the way to proceed in a case where there is an inadequate stock of medicines, and where there are too few symptoms. The answer? Surprisingly; do your best. Find a similar and work from there. Observe, wait, reanalyse, and allow the picture to emerge. Just as the golfer wants to get to the pin in the shortest number of shots - one if possible - so the homeopath has the promise of the simillimum and the possibility of the hole in one. While aspiring to this at all times, the reality of practice is somewhat different as is the experience of every golfer. We do our best and get there as quickly as we can and in as few shots as possible. Just as the archer aspires to the gold, the 10, the centre ring, the perfect simillimum promises the patient relief and the homeopath thanks. But to my way of thinking, while aspiring at all times to the ideal of perfection, the reality is that 9's still win gold medals and Tiger still is human and sometimes only makes par or bogies a few holes, and he still wins.

In order to refine our art and science therefore we need the breadth that new remedies provides. Scorpion for example is such a hugely useful remedy that was not around 30 years ago. Instead of getting the Scorpion simillimum we may have had to make do with Platina and Anacardium and get to the result in a longer period of time. Similarly I have had some just stunning results from the use of White Tailed Spider. It wasn't available until the year 2000.

So while expanding the amount of remedies available to us as a profession we have to realize that they are hopelessly inadequate when given the potential bounty of nature. There are at least 20,000 species of spider, 3000 beetles, 4000 varieties of pitcher plants. It goes on. We are always surely working with close similars and the occasional simillimum.

If this is the case then our attention must turn to the accuracy of the information we already have at our disposal.

As an exercise on unsuspecting students I encourage them to look to a primary source book such as Chronic Diseases, Materia Medica Pura or a materia medica like Vermeulen's Prisma and find remedies that have fewer than five listed provers. Some are often shocked. There are heaps of them. Further, there is so little by way of information on the method used in the trials that some students become disillusioned. There was seemingly no information on the blinding, run in, supervision, placebo, female provers or cross overs in the provings of the old masters; nothing. They may well have been the 'high feasts in the church' and that is fine because feasting can be a lot of fun, but what about the accuracy of the information. Does it matter? Does it reduce the value of the information provided by those provings of Hanhenamn and the great masters? Most would argue no.

Yet when it comes to modern provings the blow torch of critics is often applied to their methodology using completely different criteria. Reviewers burn the writers for some perceived fault in the

manufacture of the medicine, or the method employed, or the inclusion of secondary symptoms or meditation symptoms or dream symptoms or symptoms of the supervisors. A glance at the books by Sherr, Herscu, Tumminello and others reveal some very different opinions.

It has been through asking questions such as this that crystallised in my mind the need to conduct reprovings of old remedies as well as push the boundaries of the new and exciting world of new remedies. Students love this idea when confronted with the inadequacies of our fundamental source information. Vermeulen in Prisma writes a lovely chapter on Bufo. But it's deeply disturbing to realise that the information we have on that fundamental remedy comes from such wobbly methodology.

These then are the primary reasons for my decision to reprove some of the old remedies; to what extent can old provings be replicated to get similar results using similar (better?) and more rigorous methods?

The choice of the remedies reprovven here was fairly arbitrary. They were my choice, but all were conducted double blind. The trials included in this volume are from 2002 Cockroach, 2003 Toad, 2004 Cactus and 2005 Seahorse

## 1. THE LAY OUT OF THESE DOCUMENTS; THREE PROVINGS IN ONE

In 2005 I completed my first proving manual. The trials however had been completed long before that in 1999 Moreton Bay Fig, 2000 White Tailed Spider and 2001 Box Jellyfish. They are all available individually electronically, or as individual manuals. All are on the computer software programs from Kent Associates, Archibel and Miccant.

I laid them out in a very specific way and the reasons for that are in the first book.

Similarly in this the second manual I have provided three versions of each of the provings here. In each of these three provings the first proving document consists solely of the primary symptoms only of the provers that cannot (I would argue) under any criteria be questioned. They are the immediate and primary responses to the medicating substance. With the revival of Bonninghausen's method in Australia stimulated by the work of Gypser and Dimitriadis I feel it crucial to present this document as one that is clear, clean and rigorous in its production.

But there is also a second proving document included for each proving. This document includes the totality of the first but also vastly more information, which provides context for many of the symptoms, fills out the proving and gives a feel for it, a flavour of it. Rather than being a dry list of symptoms, this part includes dreams and symptoms and thoughts of both supervisors and provers.

Therefore there are two documents for each proving; both rigorous and with no superfluous information. The **first** includes only *primary symptoms*. The **second** includes the information also gleaned from supervisors that is directly relevant, both *primary and secondary* information for the purpose of understanding deeply what the remedy is really about. There is also a **third** section for each proving; a brief chronology is included which highlights the first few day's experience of the major provers. This is included for the reader to provide a feel for the immediate response to the remedy, a different way of structuring the information. I have found there are times when the schema '*as if one person*' layout of proving information can be somewhat one-dimensional. I notice Herscu structures his *Alcoholus* proving in this way.

The methodology employed in the completion of these provings is Hahnemannian and essentially follows the guidelines as laid out in Sherr's Methodologies book. While this is not the only method possible it is the one my training was grounded in and essentially the one employed in all the Nature Care College provings. The exceptions come from the publication of Herscu's two books on provings where he makes some astute observations on some aspects of current methods employed. As mentioned these trials were conducted double blind.

Reading a proving manual can be tough going. As dry as a pommy's towel. Some are straight up boring. But the reasons for presenting the raw data to the profession in this way are crucial, utterly necessary and discussed at length in Volume III.

## **THE FOUR REMEDIES INCLUDED HERE**

### **BLATTA ORIENTALIS; INDIAN COCKROACH**

I recently read an article about the possibility that SARS may have been spread by the cockroach. If any part of this is true then this proving is going to be of immense value. I have now used it extensively in my clinic and taught the use of it and the symptoms of this proving widely. I recall the bizarre symptoms of swelling of the legs and the exhaustion, deep and profound exhaustion which was created in these grumpy provers in 2002. The difficulty in respiration, and the fatigue, oh my god! the fatigue. The symptoms were firmly centred in the respiratory system and the incapacity to breath was deeply troublesome. Married to the other provings of Blatta this information will serve to solidify our previously shakey assertions about this remedy.

### **BUFO RANA; COMMON TOAD**

Early last century, a small minded agriculturalist with finger nail vision imported the cane toad from Peuto Rico to Queensland to take care of the cane beetle that compromised the sugar cane crops. The rest is an appalling history. These beasts have taken over, eat anything, kill native fauna and anything that moves. Some love them as pests. Some run them over as a duty; in fact it's considered unaustralian not to line them up and get as many as you can. Others use them to practice some golf swings and I must admit that there is some satisfaction to thwacking the pest that is destroying the countryside and improving your game at the same time. Others boil them down and drink the juice in the absence of other hallucinogenic excitement. The cane toad has much similarity to the toad proven here. The predominant residue from the proving was dumbness and an utter inability to think.

### **CACTUS GRANDIFLORUS; CACTUS**

Cactus grandiflorus was a small but valuable proving. I feel the results here will ultimately complement our understanding of the remedy as it is used currently. It produced the mos extrodinary flushes of heat. Cutting, stabbing and pressure in the chest. Blood circulating like fire.

### **HIPOCAMPUS KUDA; SEAHORSE**

This proving was conducted to complement the more recent proving conducted in the USA. Seahorses are in trouble arounds the world. They are struggling in their environments "with the onslaught of human encroachment. They are endlessly fascinating. A massive one was washed up on Bondi beach the other day with the autumnal post cyclonic swells that battered the coast. Given their extrodinary nature I was surprised at the blandness of the symptoms given its animal origin. Perhaps it goes to confirm that only truly toxic substances in the wild make for the best provings.

To the generosity of these students who acted as either provers or supervisors or researchers over these years, my thanks for your perserverance and courage and time and generosity. I am sincerely grateful.

**Alastair Gray  
Sydney 2006**



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