

A PHARMACOGRAPHIC ANATOMY OF RHUS TOXICODENDRON

George Dimitriadis

BSc.(UNSW), DHom.(Syd), DHomMCCH(Eng), M(Hon)JPHMA (Jpn), LiRF(HISyd)
Hahnemann Institute Sydney: www.hahnemanninstitute.com

The following analytical exposition of *Rhus toxicodendron* follows the basic methodological approach illustrated in my previous article on a dissective *Pharmacographic Anatomy*.¹

We hereunder present the full record of toxicological effects recruited by Hahnemann for his *Reine Arzneimittellehre* (RA)² as cited by Hahnemann, in alphabetical order of the source code assigned in our ongoing *Materia Medica Hahnemannica* (MMH)³ project. We have provided each account in its original language to allow for others better able to communicate their suggestions for improvement where needed.

*Pharmacogenesis*⁴

The development and extension of our pharmacographic record as given below for *Rhus toxicodendron* shows that of the 975 symptoms listed in RA_{III} (1833), only 49 derive from 17 old-school sources. But these often provide such helpful descriptions towards understanding the time-wise sequential effects of a substance, helping to connect the fragments from a number of observers into a more comprehensive whole.

<i>Rhus toxicodendron</i>	RA _I	RA _{II}	RA _{III}	Hahnemann	old school	homœopathic school
RA _{I-III} (vol.2; 1816,1824,1833)	743 409 + (334)	936 575 + (361)	975	580	49	346

Studied together, these original accounts describe the effects of *Rhus toxicodendron* on skin and nerves, well correlated and extended by the *methodical provings* elaborated by Hahnemann and his collaborators,⁵ and from which our singular homœopathic induction guides its use in similar conditions.

It is not within the scope of this disquisition to extend into the manifold and revealing observations derived from methodical substance trials conducted by Hahnemann and contributed by his co-workers, suffice it here to mention their names and number of their symptoms recruited:

Frz, Franz [196]; *FrH*, Friedrich Hahnemann [27]; *HTRA* Hartlaub & Trinks' RA [32]; *Hbg*, Hornburg [14]; *J-Lhm*, J.G.Lehmann [14]; *Mch*, Michler [12]; *E-Rkt*, E.F.Rückert [12]; *Srt*, Schrëter (Shröder) [5]; *Stf*, Stapf [34].

¹ Dimitriadis, G.: Pharmacographic Anatomy, dissective study of our MM record, 11 April 2022, available at: <https://www.hahnemanninstitute.com/articles>

² Hahnemann, S.: *Reine Arzneimittellehre* (RA), Englished by R.E. Dudgeon as *Materia Medica Pura* (MMP).

³ MMH adjoins RA/CK into a single volume, tracing the near 6,000 symptoms from around 650 old-school authors cited by Hahnemann to their original sources. In doing this work, we saw an advantage to codify each author and reference to remove unnecessary visual clutter at the symptom site, and this allowed us to expand fully the citation, as well to add further clarifying endnotes

⁴ I use this term to refer to the 'birth' of symptoms taken into our MM.

⁵ As for example the vertigo reported by Alderson (*Rhus*.7 Vertigo. [A₁₀]), Zadig (*Rhus*.8 Very severe vertigo. [Z₂]), and Hufeland (*Rhus*.17 Vertigo. [H₅₂]), is made more clear and enlarged by our homœopathic school:

3 Violent vertigo on lying down with fear that he will die (aft. 10h). [H]

4 Vertigo: all went round with her; worst when walking and standing, also (but less) when sitting, but not at all when lying. [H]

5 When walking reeling, unsteady and staggering in the body, without being giddy in the head. [H]

9 Vertigo, as if he were held up high, while sitting. [Frz]

11 Reeling and staggering when walking, without vertigo. [E-Rkt]

12 He always staggers to the right when walking. [Frz]

14 Vertigo and stupid feeling in the head. [FrH]

16 Weakness in the head; when she turned her head she lost consciousness; when she stooped she felt as if she could not rise up again. [Hbg]

18 When sitting, stupid in the head as if intoxicated, giddy with tendency to fall forwards and backwards. [H]

19 When walking, giddy as if she would fall forwards. [H]

20 In the morning on rising quite dizzy; he can hardly keep on his legs. [H]

old-school authorities

cited by Hahnemann for *Rhus toxicodendron*

- A₁₀ Alderson, John: *An essay on the rhus toxicodendron, with cases of its effects in the cure of paralytic affections, and other diseases of great debility*, Hull, 3rd enlarged edition, 1804. [12 symptoms]

From the *London Medical Gazette*, 1837, vol.20, p.679, we read:

“Dr. Alderson, of Hull, was the first to draw the attention of medical practitioners of this country to the medical properties of this plant, by an essay which he published on the subject in 1793.”

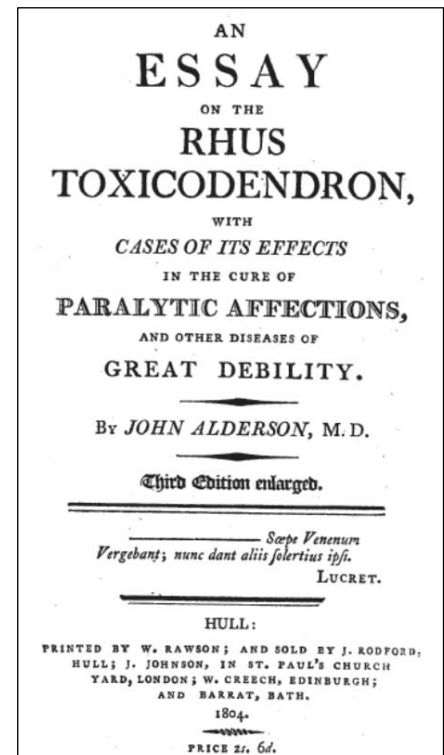
Alderson’s excellent little (63 page) booklet *An essay on the rhus toxicodendron* first appeared in 1793, and a German translation (by L.F. Friep) *Versuch über das Rhus Toxicodendron...* appeared in 1799. But Hahnemann cites the relatively short (albeit generally excellent) review given in *Sammlung auserlesener Abhandlung zum Gebrauche für practischer Aertze*, 1796, vol.17, no.1, pp.94-103.

Although *Rhus toxicodendron* first appears in vol. 2 of RA_I (1816), Hahnemann earlier makes mention of it in his *Apothekerlexicon*, Leipzig, 1799, vol.2, part 2, p.56, wherein he is already aware of Alderson’s work:

“... hat Alderson in Lähmungen zu einem bis vier Gran, täglich mehrere Mahle gegeben, welches eine allzu starke Gabe zu seyn scheint. Sie machen, nach meiner Erfahrung, eine Art von Fieber.”

[... Alderson has given in paralysis from one to four grains, several times daily, which seems to be too strong a dose. It causes, in my experience, a kind of fever.]

Hence it seems Hahnemann did not examine the German translation of *Friorep* (as it was also published in 1799), but only the review in the *Sammlung* of 1796, which alone he cites. Just why Hahnemann did not visit the original of Alderson may be perhaps explained by its inaccessibility during this time when he was residing in *Königsutter* (2½ years between 1796-1799).



This must be kept in mind when assessing the rendition of Hahnemann whenever we find some difficulties of translation (albeit not insurmountable), and we must also keep in mind that Hahnemann’s genius as is evident throughout his pharmacography, was his intimate knowledge of the effects of a substance derived from careful examination of toxicological and overdose reports coupled with his own provings experiments, *prior* to his acceptance of any information into his own pharmacography, and that this sometimes necessitated ‘clarifications’ by way of changes to expressions made by those reporters of varying accuracy or skill in observation.

Alderson’s 3rd edition (1804) which is in our possession, follows-up on earlier observations and further adds half a dozen cases (including those corresponded to Alderson) from previous (2nd) edition (1796 – also in our possession). In this work, Alderson relates his experiences using *Rhus toxicodendron* in paralytic cases, and provides a very valuable outline of the effectiveness of this remedy, but also, and especially for the homœopathic prescriber, mentions the consistent spill-over effects from too large doses. Such is the value of this work that we have thought it useful to reproduce in large part (and ask for the reader’s indulgence), those cases which describe the toxicological effects (spill-over) over and above illustrating its clinical efficacy:

“No attempt was ever made in this country to ascertain, by experiments, the power of the Toxicodendron, as a medicine, before the cases related in the first publication of this Essay in 1794. ... The *Rhus Toxicodendron* is a native of North America, it has been introduced into England ever since the year 1640, and was cultivated in this country as a curious shrub in the time of Parkinson, who figures it in his Theatre.

The following history of cases in which this plant has been employed, will enable the reader to judge of its power as a medicine.

Case 1 – Mr. B —, relating an account from his wife, Barton, July 25, 1793

Mrs. B —, aged 38, always enjoyed remarkable good health, till about eight years ago, at which time she complained of a disorder in her bowels, which she described to feel as if the bowels had lost their sensation, and that a cold wind seemed to rise up the œsophagus. As she was costive, two ounces of the *Ol. Ricini* were given at four doses, which having no effect, stronger purgatives were administered, but without producing a stool; after which the smoke of tobacco was thrown up, the warm bath applied, a dose of calomel given, and a blister put upon the belly. At length an evacuation was obtained; and from the large quantity of cathartic remedies used, the bowels now took on the other extreme, and a violent purging ensued. She now complained of a pricking pain on the right side of the abdomen, which went off upon her voiding by stool a piece of a large plumb stone, one side of which was worn as sharp as the edge of a knife. After this she was frequently troubled with obstinate constipations of the bowels, and obliged to have recourse to purgative medicines. In the year 1789, she had two fits, which, I believe, were epileptic; but, as I happened not to see her in either of them, I cannot be certain. In the month of September, she was seized with pains in her hands and feet, which were supposed to be gouty; and when these went off, she lost entirely the use of the extensor muscles of the wrists, and soon after those of the feet, which was followed by the loss of the extensors of the fingers and toes. A tumour now arose upon the metacarpal bones of each hand, which seemed a swelling either of the periosteum or bone itself, and had greatly the appearance of a scrophulous affection. The tumours seemed sometimes likely to suppurate, but about the end of the year 1790, they gradually disappeared. The hands now looked livid, and the extensor muscles, upon the arms and hands, wasted and shrivelled; her feet felt like logs of wood, and the fingers and toes were contracted from the action of the flexor muscles; she could not walk without help, and when she attempted it, always complained of something drawing her backwards. During this time, she took a variety of volatile, cardiac, and tonic medicines, but without any good effect. In the month of September, 1791, *Dr. Alderson* was consulted, and advised her to take the *Toxicodendron*. Six grains of the powdered leaves of that plant were infused in eight ounces of boiling water, a table spoonful to be given three times a day. The whole of this was taken without any sensible effect, except a slight pricking sensation in the feet and hands:

Oct. 3d She took one fourth of a grain of the powdered leaves made into a bolus with *Cons. Cort. Aurant.* twice a day.

4th The same; the pricking sensation continues, and the arms, to the ends of the fingers, feel as if warm water was running down them.

5th Medicines continued three times a day.

6th The same. In the evening had an irregular spasmodic fluttering in the toes.

7th Medicines continued. Was agreeably surprised to find she could extend her fingers and toes a little. Her hands a little swelled, and her feet and ancles much more so. She has, in a great measure, recovered the use of the extensor pollicis of the right hand, and that of the left in a smaller degree; has also lost the dead hard sensation in her finger ends, which was always her constant attendant.

8th Medicines continued.

9th One third of a grain ter die.

10th The same. Walked up stairs without help, her hands also stronger and better, but the extensors of the wrists still inactive.

11th The same.

12th Took half a grain ter die. Begins to walk tolerably well, and can use her hands better, the extensor, adductor, and abductor, muscles of the thumbs, having recovered their action.

15th Three grains were made into four boluses, and one taken three times a day. At night the sensation, as if hot water was running down the arms, very troublesome, with the pricking feel in the fingers.

17th One grain ter die.

30th Takes one grain and a half ter die; and this day perceived that she had recovered the use of the extensor muscles of the wrists.

She continued the medicine, gradually increasing the dose to four grains ter die, for some time longer. It seemed to act as a gentle aperient, and frequently, when the large doses were taken, occasioned a slight vertigo, with a pain across the forehead, and a nausea for about half an hour after taking it. She has now left off the medicine twelve months, has entirely recovered the use of her hands, and walks a mile or two very well; but the muscles of the feet are not so well recovered as those of the hands, and she always lifts the feet very high when she walks, which may be owing to a remembrance that in her former state, if she attempted walking, and met with the smallest obstacle, a fall on the face was generally the consequence.

March 1802. This Lady has continued free from her paralytic complaints ever since.

Case 3

Mr. B —, surgeon, aged 47, after having been afflicted for many months with a complication of disorders, hæmoptysis, jaundice, mesenteric obstruction, and general atrophy, lost entirely the use of all his limbs; and even his mental faculties underwent a similar paralysis. All his powers of ratiocination were suspended, and he was reduced to a state nearly as helpless as that of a child only six months old. In this situation I gave him the *Toxicodendron*, half a grain three times a day, which, in the course of a week, improved his appetite, and removed the habitual costiveness to which he had long been subject. The dose was gradually increased to one grain, three times a day. It produced

some twitching across the abdomen, with irregular or convulsive motion in the limbs; and when the nervous influx seemed to pass to the extremities, it excited in the brain such a sensation of pain, as made him frequently exclaim most violently: but when any one asked him where his pain was, he answered, he could not mention any particular place, but that all his limbs were, as if stretched forcibly. This was more especially the case after sleep. The dose was gradually increased to three grains four times a day. His brain has recovered its wonted functions; his stomach and bowels do their office more completely than for years; he rests without opium, though for a long time in the constant habit of taking it; his animal spirits are wonderfully invigorated; and although he has not yet acquired the perfect use of his limbs, they seem to be recovering their tone, and I have every reason to hope, that he will, in time, be restored to the full enjoyment of life.*

* This Gentleman increased the dose the following year to twenty grains, was perfectly restored, and went through the duties of his profession several years afterwards.

Case 4 – December 24, 1793

George Ford, ship carpenter, aged 24, of a strong athletic make, and full habit of body, was admitted into the Hull General Infirmary, on Wednesday the 13th of November, 1793, for a paralytic affection, which had deprived him of the use of his right side; his recollection was so impaired, that he could not give any account of the attack himself, but his wife informed me, that, for a week before he lost the use of his limbs, he had, at times, complained of a dull pain in his head, and numbness in his right hand and foot; that, by the advice of some old woman, he had been blooded on the Monday, and that upon going out of doors soon afterwards, he was seized with hemiplegia. In which state he was admitted into the Infirmary, on the Wednesday following. A vomit was given him soon after his admission, which was followed the next day by a warm purgative, and volatile and stimulant medicines for the course of the first week; but thinking that he was not likely to gain any ground from the usual plan, and being desirous of trying the power of the *Toxicodendron* in a recent case, I ordered him half a grain of the powdered leaves of this plant in pills, three times a day; on the second day, after the exhibition of this medicine, he felt a sudden convulsive twitching, or involuntary motion in certain muscles of the affected side; from that moment he found he had the same motion at will; every succeeding day he felt some muscle or other convulsively moved, and it was always remarked, by the other patients in the same ward, that he possessed the power of voluntarily employing all those muscles that had been once convulsively affected in consequence of the *Toxicodendron*. He regularly pursued the medicine, and gradually increased it to one grain every four hours, taking care always to add to the dose, till he found some convulsive action was produced. In the course of three weeks, in which time every injured muscle had felt the influence of this powerful drug, he regained the free and perfect motion of his leg and arm; and recovered the full enjoyment of his mental faculties, which had been equally affected from the first attack.

Case 6

Peacock, aged 60, by trade a carpenter, about a fortnight before he applied to me, was suddenly, whilst at work, deprived of the use of the right arm, and at the same time, found himself unable to articulate. He immediately sent for a Surgeon, who very properly applied all the common stimulants for a fortnight, though to no purpose; he then recommended him to my attention as a proper subject for the *Toxicodendron*, he had the symptoms of palsy already mentioned. I ordered him one grain three times a day; on the second day he found a tingling sensation at the ends of his fingers, and soon began to recover the use of his hand. In the course of seven days, in which he took only twenty-one grains, he was perfectly recovered, and was able to speak as articulately as before.

Case 8 – *Nervous Hemicrania*

Mrs. L. informed me that she had been for many months afflicted with a painful affection in the face, which usually began with the sensation of extreme coldness descending from the eye through the antrum maxillare, into the upper jaw, and thence to the lower, attacking only half the face. This pain usually continued twelve or fourteen hours, producing the most excruciating agonies, till it began to grow warm and swell, she then got ease, but the part affected continued swelled for twelve hours longer; the complaint always left her much debilitated, and subject to colliquative sweatings, till the period of its return; this usually was after an interval of five or six weeks, but in less time, if she got cold by any little imprudence. — She had taken, before I saw her, a variety of opening and tonic medicines, and when I visited her was taking a decoction of bark with the elixir of vitriol. Believing, at that time, that the complaint was merely an intermittant of the head, and that it had continued only from the want of a sufficient quantity of the bark being thrown in, near the period of its recurrence, I ordered an ounce of the powder of bark, to which was added ten grains of the volatile alkali, to be taken in twenty-four hours, as near the time of its usual accession as possible; this was complied with, and the fit was certainly less violent than had ever been before; she had no return of the sweating during the interval. Prior to the next paroxysm she repeated the dose of bark, and felt but little of the fit; still, however it did return, and although it was kept under during the remainder of the summer, by repeated doses, it recurred again in the autumn, and grew more distressing than ever; I now proposed to her to try the *Toxicodendron*, which she did, by taking at first the third of a grain, but in a few days a most distressing nausea was induced, accompanied with the utmost horror of the medicine, and I could not, by any arguments, persuade her to a farther continuance in its use; the fit never afterwards returned, and she has remained ever since free from this most painful disease.

Case 10 – Extract of a letter from Mr. Featherston, Apothecary and Druggist (H. Featherston, Hull)

“Daniel Barton, aged 14, of a spare habit of body, when playing on a ship’s mast, lost his hold, and fell, his foot however catching in the shrouds, he received no external injury, nor did he make any complaint when he got home. About a month after this his mother perceived a remarkable alteration in his hand-writing, and his master was induced to punish him for inattention: a great awkwardness was observed in the manner of eating his meals, his right hand usually hanging by his side. His mouth was drawn on one side, his speech affected, the right foot in walking was not properly lifted up, but trailed. At this time his hand-writing resembled that of a boy just beginning to learn. His parents finding reproof to have no effect, applied to me for assistance. I ordered him the *Toxicodendron*, a quarter of a grain to be taken three times a day; the quantity of the dose was afterwards increased to half a grain, without producing any sensible effect. When however I gave him ten grains a day, he felt a tingling sensation in his fingers, and a starting in his toes, with a great warmth in the extremities. The doses were increased to six grains each, and his recovery gradually proceeded, and was strikingly observable in the progressive improvement of his hand-writing, he continued in the use of the medicine, gradually diminishing its strength, till his recovery was completed.”

Case 17

Mrs. aged 50 years, after having suffered a variety of complaints, was suddenly seized with hemiplegia, and at the time I saw her had been for above a fortnight incapable of moving the affected side, I ordered five grains of *Toxicodendron* twice a day; at the end of the first week she began to walk, and use her hands, she continued the use of her medicine, and the dose was ordered to be daily increased; but taking twenty-five grains upon going to bed, she was suddenly seized with a violent pain in her foot, resembling the cramp, it went off upon getting out of bed; the same effect was repeated after the same dose the next night, the foot was drawn downwards, and the ankle distorted. As I had never yet seen any lasting convulsive action from the medicine, and as the dose, though large, was ordered to be gradually increased, I was somewhat surprised at these effects; it however was at length accounted for; she had constantly received her increased doses from the Apothecary, but had only now and then taken a paper of any that was at hand; one time she had taken ten grains, the next twenty-five grains, and it was after this sudden increase that she first felt the cramp, and saw the foot swelled. Upon examination I found the whole leg tumid and inflamed, and the flexors of the foot in constant action; from this time she gave up the use of the medicine, and I had the mortification of losing another opportunity of adding a cure to the above. One thing however, I learnt from the case, that the medicine is capable of doing harm if too suddenly increased; but these effects wear off, for this patient has now been without medicine two months, the cramps and swellings have left her, and she is nearly in the state to which she was brought by the medicine when it produced its best effect.

Case 18 – by Mr. Fielding

E. G, a widow, aged 60, was seized on the 12th April, 1795, whilst walking across her room, with a vertigo, so as to stagger considerably, and remaining in that state for some time, upon recovering a little found herself unable to move the left arm and leg. I saw her on the 19th following, when I found the above mentioned, with a little retraction of the muscles of the left side of the face, and a degree of coldness in the hand and leg of the same side; pulse natural, appetite pretty good, belly regular — gave her one grain of the *Toxicodendron* every two hours. April 22. Continues the same, except a little pain sometimes in the calf of the left leg. — two grains and a half. April 23. Pain in the calf of the leg, a little prickling felt at the end of two or three fingers of the left hand, complains of some vertigo, continue *Toxicodendron*. April 25, warmth of the affected side still increasing, the motion of the leg becomes less difficult; vertigo quite gone off, continue the medicine as before. April 26. Is able to cross her room with assistance; motion and sensation of the leg still continues to increase, continues. May 1, pain of the arm, and prickling of the hand and fingers, feels frequent flushes of heat in the affected arm returning at intervals; can walk across her room with very little assistance. Strength and warmth of the leg continue to increase very sensibly. July 6, till this day the medicine was discontinued, not being able to procure any. During this interval she has continued to gain strength very gradually, so that she can now walk about pretty well, though the leg feels weak, arm remains in the same state except the prickling, which went off on discontinuing the medicine; the flexors of the fingers seem most affected; though a general numbness and incapability of much motion continue in the whole of the arm. Four grains to a dose. July 15, feels a prickling and sense of heat in several parts of the arm, but particularly in the course of the extensor digitorum: ordered to take a dose of opening pills to obviate costiveness, continue four grains. July 17. from this time till about the 30th the dose of the medicine was gradually increased to eighteen grains every two hours, during which time she gained considerably the use of her arm and hand, and the leg became nearly well.

Case 19 – by Mr. Fielding, Hull, Dec. 1, 1795.

Mrs. R — , a widow, aged 50, of a florid complexion, was seized with an apoplexy, whilst walking in the street, on the 17th of August, 1790; she remained for some days in a state of entire insensibility, after which she began gradually to recover her reason and senses till December, from which time her complaints were almost stationary. She had then a paralytic affection of the whole of the left side, a retraction of the muscles of the face of the same, some faltering in her speech, and her understanding and memory considerably impaired, she was in other respects pretty well, excepting want of sleep, for which she was ordered four grains of purified opium, every night; this never failed to procure her a good night, and render her cheerful the next day; for the paralytic affection, electricity and a

variety of other remedies were used for a considerable time with very little effect. March 21, 1794, complaints remain much the same, excepting that her friends suppose her understanding and memory rather more impaired: half a grain of *Toxicodendron* ter die. The dose of the *Toxicodendron*, after this time, was gradually increased to three grains three times a day, and continued for about a fortnight, without perceiving the least effect; judging that this might be occasioned by the quantity of opium taken at the same time, I began on the 24th of April to lessen the dose of the anodyne, and in the course of about two months, by proceeding very gradually, she was brought to sleep tolerably well without it. June 29, the symptoms was now much the same as before; ordered to take four grains of the *Toxicodendron*, three times in the course of the day. July 10, some prickling in the ends of two or three fingers of the left hand, and likewise some sudden convulsive motion of the leg on the same side, her friends suppose that her memory is some what improved, continue medicine, nine grains three times a day. July 11, slept ill in the night, prickling of the fingers and convulsive motion of the leg remain, memory improved, as she can distinctly remember things spoken yesterday, whereas about ten days ago, she could not remember any thing said to her for an hour. July 12, much the same; the medicine was continued in the same dose for some days longer, during which time her memory was much altered for the better, and she gained considerably the motion of the arm and leg; but as she continued to sleep ill, her friends grew impatient, the use of the medicine was discontinued, and she had again recourse to the opium, which was continued till May, 1795; when she was attacked with another fit of the apoplexy, which she only survived a few days.

Letter from J. Johnston, Beverley, March 1804

Dear Sir, I received the favor of yours, am vastly better of my paralytic complaint, and I really do believe by the use of the *Toxicodendron*, have the highest opinion of it, and do certainly think better of it, if possible, than when I before gave you my opinion of it. I can safely pronounce it a very valuable medicine, of great active powers, from my own experience. When I encreased the dose more than twenty seven grains in a day, it gently stimulated my bowels, in every other respect perfectly agreed with me, and I daily grew better. Was obliged to leave off its use, from having a most violent vomiting, pain in my stomach, and terrible rheumatism, with which I am yet extremely tormented, and not able to say so much of the medicine to you as I wish, writing being a trouble to me. The medicine was and is certainly worth my attention, and yourself justly entitled to my best thanks.

Case 20 – by Mr. Ellis.

Jan. 31, 1803, I was requested to attend *Mary Simpson*, a young woman, aged 20, milliner. I learnt that she had been attacked about a week before with a violent pain in the head, and on the morning of that day, the 31st, on getting up she perceived her mouth drawn very considerably to one side, she had no feeling on the right side of her face, and the half of her tongue on the same side was perfectly void of sensibility, and her speech scarcely intelligible. I ordered a stimulant embrocation to be applied to the face, and three table spoons full of the infus. Amar. to be taken every four hours. Feb. 2. no alteration having taken place, I ordered six grains of the *Toxicodendron* to be taken with each dose of the infusion, and a blister to be applied behind the right ear. Feb. 3, she felt a slight tingling in the right cheek, with a little dizziness and pain in the head; the medicines were continued, and on Feb. 5th, the mouth was become nearly in its natural situation, she could speak more intelligibly, and her tongue had nearly regained its proper feeling; the *Toxicodendron* was continued until the 16th, when she was so perfectly recovered as to need no further remedies.

Case 21 – By Mr. Ellis, April 24, 1804.

On the 8th of September, 1803, *Elizabeth Meek*, aged 40, of rather a delicate habit, while attending the funeral of a child was seized with hemiplegia. I saw her about an hour afterwards, and found a total deprivation of feeling and motion had taken place on the right side, the face considerably distorted, and such a loss of speech as to be with difficulty understood; her pulse was quick, and she complained of being thirsty. I ordered her the mist: camphor: with aq: ammon: acet: and a stimulating embrocation to be applied to the parts affected. Sept. 9th, the paralytic affection as yesterday, the skin moist with less thirst; I ordered the mixture to be discontinued, and eight grains of the *Toxicodendron* to be taken every four hours, the embrocation to be used as before; 10th, the right side as on the 9th, she complained of a slight dizziness, sickness, and loss of appetite. I ordered three table spoons full of the compounded infusion of gent. to be taken with each dose of the powders; 11th, the dizziness and sickness rather abated, the limbs as before, I ordered the powders and infusion to be taken every three hours, and a large blister to be applied to the leg and arm; 12th, the dizziness rather increased, the diseased side as before, the blisters had added but very slightly; I had them dressed with ung. resin flav. and directed the medicines to be continued. Sept. 13. Ten A. M. she complained of the dizziness being much increased, and of a prickling sensation in the skin of the right thigh and leg; the blisters were again dressed, and the medicines directed to be given as usual; 6 P. M. I was requested to see her immediately; I found the face much less distorted, her speech much plainer, and the sense of feeling and motion gradually returning in the thigh, but attended with the most violent pain in it, which increased in proportion with its power of action, so as to make it necessary to have two people to keep her in bed. I ordered the infusion and powders to be omitted, being unwilling to give an opiate, least I should check returning sensibility. I ordered the embrocation, friction, and warm fomentations to be applied to the limb, but without any relief for two hours, and was then under the necessity of giving her a draught with twenty-five drops tinct. opi. in camphor julep, and also of repeating it in an hour after, when she became considerably easier. In the interim of my seeing Mrs. M. and the last ordered draughts

being received, 1 found on my next visit the same pain was coming on in the right arm as had previously began in the thigh, but abated on taking the first draught; 14th, the face and voice remained better, the pain quite gone; she was free from dizziness, and had slept tolerably well in the night; but had lost the use of her thigh. I ordered the *Toxicodendron* and infusion to be resumed every four hours, but which from the dread of the pain being brought on again was neglected : at 7 P. M. the power of motion was still weaker than in the morning, notwithstanding which I could not prevail upon her to have recourse to the powders again; 15th, the motion was entirely gone again, she then consented to take the powders, which I ordered to be repeated every three hours; 16th, Ten A. M. the pain was beginning to come again in the thigh and leg, which increased considerably during the whole day, but was not so violent as on the 13th, and at 7 P. M. she could again draw up her leg and thigh as she laid in bed, her speech was also much better; 17th, the motion of the leg and thigh continued increasing, but the arm remained perfectly useless; the pain had been so great in the night as to prevent her sleeping, and she complained much of the dizziness and sickness; I ordered her medicine to be given every four hours; 18 th, she had a restless night, but the pain, dizziness and sickness were rather abated, and the motion of the leg and thigh better; in the afternoon she was able to sit up a little on the edge of the bed for the first time since her attack, but complained, on setting her foot to the ground, of great numbness in it; 19th, she had slept better, the pain, dizziness and sickness almost gone, and she was able, with the abidance of two people to walk from the bed to the fire, her mouth and speech had nearly recovered their natural date, but the arm still remained exactly as before. On the 20th, 21d and 22d, she kept gradually getting better, and could walk with the help of a crutch, no alteration had taken place in the arm; on the 23d I increased the dose of *Toxicodendron* to ten grains, which she continued to take without any particular effect, excepting an increase of dizziness until the 26th, when she felt a pricking in the skin of the arm, and a tingling of the fingers, and on the 27th she could move her arm a little; from that time to October 5th no alteration took place, she began to be tired of taking medicines, and wished to try what effect time would produce upon her. The disease, however, remained exactly stationary; finding her unwilling to resume her medicines, I advised her to try electricity, which having done for about ten days, her hand and arm began to have more feeling in them, and in a fortnight longer only a slight weakness remained, since then she has regained her strength sufficiently to attend to her family concerns.

Case 22

A Young Lady between 11 and 12 years of age, was seized with a violent pain in her head, so as to render it necessary to apply to an eminent Physician by whose orders she was bled repeatedly with leeches and lancet, her eyes were so affected that she saw every object double, from which circumstance the disorder was judged to be an accumulation on the brain. When the pain in the head left her, we discovered that she had lost the use of her legs. A caustic was applied to her loins by the late Mr. *Cruikshank*, and every kind of bath, such as shower, air and fumigated, hot and cold; after that sea bathing warm and cold, without the least effect, till by the advice of the late Dr. Kirby, of Dorking, and Dr. John Crawford, she took the *Rhus Toxicodendron* made into pills, one grain each; she first took a single pill night and morning, for a week, after that time she increased one, night and morning, every three or four days, till we found her stomach nauseate, we then lessened the number to one, increasing again as before. After taking them a few weeks, she could press lightly with her foot; in the course of three months she was visibly better, when a very violent rash appeared; after which, in one month she was not only able to walk about the house, but out of it as much as half a mile, and continued mending till quite restored.

Case 24 – by Mr. Brown. Hull, Aug.5, 1796

I was called on early in the morning of the 9th of April, and found *Thomas Perry*, partly in an insensible state, with the entire loss of one side, his mouth much contracted and drawn to one side, and his speech so much impeded that it was scarcely possible to understand him, his pulse was then very tense and full, but doubting the uncertain effects, in these cases, of bleeding, I declined it. I gave him some strong purgative medicine, such as the *infus. sennæ*, made strong with the *tinct. sacra* and *tinct. Jalapii*; by these means I procured a sufficient evacuation. I then thought it a very proper case to try the effects of the *Rhus Toxicodendron* recommended in a pamphlet by Dr. Alderson. I begun with two grains three times a day, but found no particular effect for two or three days, excepting that he was a little better, and could articulate with more propriety. I then increased the dose gradually, till I came to six grains three times a day, and in two days more found their effect — I mean to say he had a general convulsive spasmodic affection, something like electricity — a peculiar kind of twitching and distortion in all his limbs — a strong involuntary irritation in all his muscles, and he believed all these effects proceeded from his medicine. I encouraged him by all means to persevere, and as an inducement, in strong terms pointed out to him that his life was indebted to them, that he was already much better, and that by a little longer continuance I did not doubt but he would be perfectly well. This had the happiest effect ten days longer with the same dose, viz. 18 grains divided into three doses, in 24 hours, had uniformly the same consequences, and he then could walk about and speak very plain. I after this gave him the Peruvian bark in large doses, the consequence was, that he soon became able to attend upon his horses as usual, and is now perfectly well. Much fatigue overpowers him, so that at times he complains of want of strength — at other times when he has sufficient rest, he tells me, for a few hours in the day, he thinks himself as strong or stronger than ever in his life. This is not the only case in which I have tried the *Rhus Toxicodendron*. I lament much that many of my patients when they found that very uneasy disagreeable irritation all over the body, and finding it proceeded from the medicine, obstinately refused taking more, but in all cases I found it had uniformly the

same effect, and I have no doubt had it been continued longer, I should have been able to give *Dr. Alderson* more flattering and more successful account of this noble medicine, for which the world in general is much indebted, and the Faculty in particular, to him who first brought it into use, not only for this, but for correcting many abuses and errors in the practice of physic in this town, in being always ready to communicate to medical men his ideas, and lastly, ever indefatigable in assisting the needy and distressed.”

The following table shows the correlation of symptoms in Hahnemann’s MMP and Alderson’s account:

<i>Alderson</i>	MMP 1880
Introduction p.vii, Cases 1, 20, 21	7 Vertigo.
Case 1, p.23: “...when the large doses were taken, occasioned a slight vertigo, with a pain across the forehead, and a nausea	43 Pain transversely across the forehead.
Cases 1, 8, 21, 23	294 Nausea.
Case 1, p.20: “She now complained of a pricking pain on the right side of the abdomen, which went off upon her voiding by stool a piece of a large plumb stone, one side of which was worn as sharp as the edge of a knife.” Case 3, pp.25-26: “The dose was gradually increased to one grain, three times a day. It produced some twitching across the abdomen, ...”	390 Twitching and pinching pain in the abdomen.
Page 48, letter from patient: “When I encreased the dose more than twenty-seven grains in a day, it gently stimulated my bowels...”	409 Diarrhoea.
Case 1, p.23: “[from ¼ grain of powdered leaves, b.d.]... the pricking sensation continues, and the arms, to the ends of the fingers, feel as if warm water was running down them. ... [from 3 grains t.d.] At night the sensation, as if hot water was running down the arms, very troublesome, with the pricking feel in the fingers.”	599 Sensation as if hot water ran through the arm.
Case 6, p.30: ... on the second day he found a tingling sensation at the ends of his fingers, Case 10, p.35: ...he felt a tingling sensation in his fingers, Case 18, p.42: ...a little prickling felt at the end of two or three fingers of the left hand... Case 19, p.45: ...some prickling in the ends of two or three fingers of the left hand, Case 21, p.50: ...she complained of the dizziness being much increased, and of a prickling sensation in the skin of the right thigh and leg... Case 21, p.53: ...she felt a pricking in the skin of the arm, and a tingling of the fingers...	646 Fine pricking pain in the fingers.
Case 2, p.24: On the second day, he felt an unusual twitching, or convulsive motion, in the arm and leg affected... Case 24 (reported by Thomas Brown), p.55: ...he had a general convulsive spasmodic affection, something like electricity – a peculiar kind of twitching and distortion in all his limbs - a strong involuntary irritation in all his muscles...	769 Twitching in the limbs.
Case 4, p.27: ...on the second day, after the exhibition of this medicine, he felt a sudden convulsive twitching, or involuntary motion in certain muscles of the affected side...	770 Twitching of several muscles.
Case 1, p.21: ...a slight pricking sensation in the feet and hands...	772 Fine pricking pains in the limbs.
Case 1, p.22: Her hands a little swelled, and her feet and ancles much more so. Case 17, p.41: ... one time she had taken ten grains, the next twenty-five grains, and it was after this sudden increase [in dose] that she first felt the cramp, and saw the foot swelled. Upon examination I found the whole leg tumid and inflamed, and the flexors of the foot in constant action...	774 Swelling of the hands and feet.
Case 3, pp.25-26: The dose was gradually increased to one grain, three times a day. It produced some twitching across the abdomen, with irregular or convulsive motion in the limbs; and when the nervous influx seemed to pass to the extremities, it excited in the brain such a sensation of pain, as made him frequently exclaim most violently: but when any one asked him where his pain was, he answered, he could not mention any particular place, but that all his limbs were, as if stretched forcibly. This was more specifically the case after sleep.	837 More especially after waking from sleep: irregular, convulsive movements in the limbs with at times such a nervous influx as to cause him to cry out most violently from a severely painful sensation as if all his limbs were stretched forcibly.*

Hahnemann thus derives the following 12 symptoms from Alderson’s account into *Rhus toxicodendron*:

7 Vertigo. [A₁₀]

43 Pain transversely across the forehead. [A₁₀]

- 294 Nausea. [A₁₀]
 390 Twitching and pinching pain in the abdomen. [A₁₀]
 409 Diarrhoea. [A₁₀]
 599 Sensation as if hot water ran through the arm. [A₁₀]
 646 Fine pricking pain in the fingers. [A₁₀]
 769 Twitching in the limbs. [A₁₀]
 770 Twitching of several muscles. [A₁₀]
 772 Fine pricking pains in the limbs. [A₁₀]
 774 Swelling of the hands and feet. [A₁₀]
 837 More especially after waking from sleep: irregular convulsive movements in the limbs with at times such a nervous influx as to cause him to cry out most violently from a severely painful sensation as if all his limbs were stretched forcibly. [A₁₀]*

* we have corrected this symptom – the German translation (of *Sammlung*...) used by Hahnemann was incorrect, i.e., the pain complained of was not located in the head, but rather in the limbs, the author (Alderson) merely used a colloquialism which was misinterpreted for the *Sammlung*... and this mistake was continued into MMP by Dudgeon who did not examine the original English of Alderson.

- D₁₄ Dudley, Paul: An account of the Poyson Wood Tree in New-England, communicated by John Chamberlain, in *The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, London, 1720-21 vol.31, pp.145-146. [2 symptoms]

Hahnemann cites Dudley in Dufresnoy, A., *Erfahrungen über die heilsame Anwendung des wurzelnden Sumachs, der gelben Narcisse und des Pfefferschwamms*, Halle, 1801, wherein Dufresnoy mentions (p.204):

“Dudley sagt: das Sumachgift würke verschiedentlich auf die verschiedenen Personen, die sich seinem Ausflusse aussetzen. Bei einigen verursacht es Geschwulst des Kopfes, bei andern brennendes Jucken.”

[Dudley says: the Sumach poison works differently on different people ... On some it causes swelling of the head, in others burning itching.]

From this account Hahnemann derives the following two symptoms into his pharmacography for *Rhus toxicodendron*:

- 105 Swelling of the head [Kopfs] * in some persons. [D₁₄]

* MMP wrongly wrote “face”

- 771 Burning itching here and there. [D₁₄]

Our policy is to refer to primary sources wherever possible, and we here provide a short excerpt from the original (brief, 2 page) report *An account of the Poyson Wood Tree in New-England*. By the Honourable Paul Dudley, Esq, F.R.S. Communicated by John Chamberlain, Esq. (pp.145-146):

“1. And first, it must be observed, that it poisons two ways, either by touching or handling of it, or by the Smell; for the Scent of it, when cut down in the Woods, on the Fire, has poisoned Persons to a very great degree. One of my Neighbours was blind for above a Week together, with only handling it. And a Gentleman in the Country, sitting by his Fire-side in the Winter, was swelled for several Days with the Smoak of some Poyson-Wood that was in the Fire.

2. A second thing to be remarked of the Poyson-Wood is, that it has this effect only on some particular Persons and Constitutions; for I have seen my own Brother not only handle it, but chew it without any harm at all. And so by the same Fire one shall be poisoned and another not at all affected.

3. But then Thirdly, this sort of Poyson is never Mortal, and will go off in a few Days of it self, like the Sting of a Bee...”

<p>PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS.</p> <p>Giving Some</p> <p>ACCOUNT OF THE</p> <p>Present Undertakings, Studies and Labours</p> <p>OF THE</p> <p>INGENIOUS,</p> <p>In Many</p> <p>Considerable Parts of the WORLD.</p> <p>VOL. XXXI. For the Years, 1720, 1721.</p> <p>L O N D O N :</p> <p>Printed for W. and J. INNES, at the <i>Princes-Arms</i>, at the <i>West</i> Corner of <i>St. Paul's Church-Yard</i>. MDCCLXXIII.</p>	<p>(145)</p> <p>V. <i>An account of the Poyson Wood Tree in New-England. By the Honourable Paul Dudley, Esq, F. R. S. Communicated by John Chamberlain, Esq;</i></p> <p>THE Poyson-Wood-Tree grows only in Swamps, or low wet Grounds, and is something like a small Ash, but much more like a <i>Sumach</i>, and therefore is by some called the <i>Swamp Sumach</i>, for the Twiggs, Leaves, and Shape are exactly like the <i>Sumach</i>, and it likewise bears a dry Berry.</p> <p>It never grows bigger than a Man's Leg, nor taller than Alder, but spreads much, and fernal together, especially about the Stump or Roots of one that is cut down; as it is of quick growth, so it does not last long; the inside of the Wood is yellow and very full of Juice, as glutinous as Honey or Turpentine; the Wood itself has a very strong unfavoury Smell, but the Juice stinks as bad as Carrion. Having thus described the Tree, we shall now proceed to give an account of its Poisonous Quality, &c.</p> <p>1. And first, it must be observed, that it poisons two ways, either by touching or handling of it, or by the Smell; for the Scent of it, when cut down in the Woods, or on the Fire, has poisoned Persons to a very great degree. One of my Neighbours was blind for above a Week together, with only handling</p>
---	--

- D₁₅ Dufresnoy, Andre: *Erfahrungen über die heilsame Anwendung des wurzelnden Sumachs, der gelben Narcisse und des Pfefferschwamms* [Experiences of the healing use of the rooting sumac, the yellow Narcissus and the Agaricus piperatus], Halle, 1801, pp.1-9, & 30. [6 symptoms]

From *Dufresnoy* (as translated by *Nasse*) we read (pp.3-9):

“Die Stadt Valenciennes un ich verdanken dem seligen Marschal von Croy den wurzelnden Sumach. Man hatte dies Pflanze bisher immer in der Medicin für unnütz und selbst für gefährlich gehalten. ... Bei einem Demonstration hatte ich auch der Vorsichtkeitsregeln erwähnt, die man beim Einsammeln dieser Pflanze zu beobachten hat, um sich vor ihren schädlichen Einfluss zu bewahren; aber ein sehr geschickter Zögling, die dr Pflanze, ohne dass es ihm schadete, mit den Händen zerrieb, überredete den Fremden bald, der wurzelnde Sumach verlöhre in Frankreich von seinen schädlichen Eigenschaften. Um diese Behauptung zu beweisen, nahm er eine Handvoll Blätter, zerstückte sie, rieb sich damit die Hände und die Handwurzel, wie er es sonst schon mehrere mal, ohne dass es ihm in mindesten nachtheilig gewesen ware, gethan hatte. Der Fremde glaubte nun, ich hätte nur scherzen wollen, und suchte es meinen Zöglinge zuvorzuthun, undem er Blätter von Sumach eine noch viel längere Zeit in seinen Händen zerrieb. Aber bald musste er seine Unbesonnenheit bereuen.

Am andern Morgen beklagte er sich über ein unangenehmes Jucken an den Händen und der Handwurzel. Er fragte den Eleven um Rath, und dies er hielt das Jucken für ein Zeichen von Krätze, die jener sich vermuthlich auf seiner letzten Reise zugezogen haben würde. Er rieth ihm, sich in der Absicht, die Krankheit zu unterdrücken, noch an dem nemlichen Tage die Hände und die Handwurzel mit einer halben Unze Unguentum citrinum zu reiben, um am folgenden Tage Mercurialpillen zum Abführen einzunehmen.

Dieser Rath würde befolgt; aber aber das Jucken nahm am folgenden Tage zu, und sowohl die Hände als die Handwurzel fingen an zu schwellen und es zeigte sich eine grosse Anzahl kleine Pusteln, was ihn jetzt in der Meinung bestätigte, es sei wirklich die Krätze. Der von neuem um Rath gefragte Eleve freute sich nun über seinen Scharfsinn, und liess die kranken Theile mit der doppelten Portion Salbe reiben, um mit der Krankheit um desto eher fertig zu werden.

Am andern Tage nach der zweiten Einreibung waren Hände und Handwurzel während der Nacht noch starker geschwollen und mit einer grossen Menge kleiner Bläschen bedeckt, welche, je nachdem sie während sieben bis acht Tagen immer mehr zunahmen, mit einer gelblichen Feuchtigkeit angefüllt wurden.

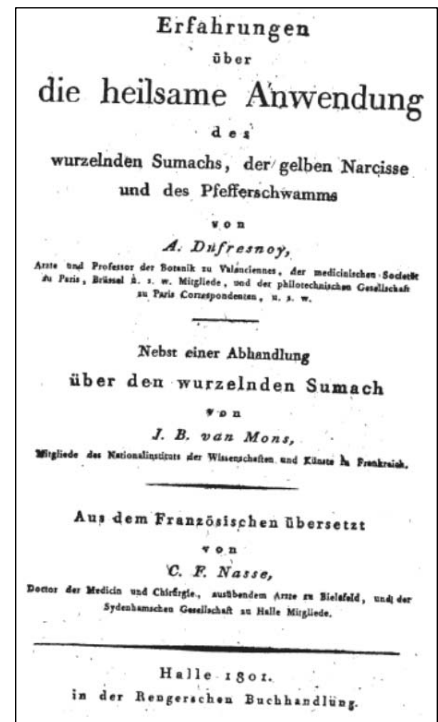
Trotz Aderlassen, Baden, erweichenden Bähungen und verdünnenden Getränken schwoll dem Kranken der Kopf so sehr an, dass er wegen der ausserordentlich starken Geschulst der Augenlider, länger als vier und zwanzig Stunden, des Gesichts beraubt war. Das Jucken erstreckte sich nachher auf alle Theile des Körpers; vorzüglich stark war es an den mit Haaren besetzten Stellen und den Geburtstheilen, welche der Kranke sich beinahe ganz zerkratze. Nach Verlauf von zehn Tagen liessen die Zufälle nach; die Handwurzeln, aus denen viel Feuchtigkeit gekommen war, verlohren ihre Oberhaut, und der Kranke war sehr erstaunt, als er bemerkte, dass eine Flechte, die er seit länger als sechs Jahren an der einen Handwurzel hatte, während seiner Krankheit geheilt war. ...

Den Anfang machte ich damit, dass ich die Wirkung des Aufgusses von dieser Pflanze an mir selbst versuche. Ich hatte zwar keine Flechten; aber ich wollte doch wissen, wie der Sumach auf den Magen wirkte. Ich liess daher ein frisches Blättchen mit einem Pfunde kochendem Wasser aufgiessen, und hiervon nahm ich anfangs, Morgens und Abends einem Esslöffelvoll. Da ich von dieser Dosis keine fühlbare Wirkung bemerkte, so vermehrte ich die Anzahl der Blättchen, für die nämliche Quantität Wasser, bis auf zwölf. Bei dieser Dosis fühlte ich gelinde Schmerzen im Magen, und Transpiration und Urin waren häufiger.”

Second Observation – case of *Maria Foucard* (p.30):

“Seit dieser Zeit würde es von Tage zu Tage besser mit ihr, bis zum Juni 1788, wo sie eine mit einem doppelten dreitägigen Fieber zusammengesetzte Gelbsucht bekam, von der sie durch die gewöhnlichen Mittel geheilt würde.”

[The town of Valenciennes and I owe the *Rhus* to the late Marshal of Croy. This plant had hitherto always been considered useless in medicine and even dangerous. ... At a demonstration I also mentioned the precautionary rules to be observed when collecting this plant, to avoid its harmful effect; but a very clever student, who rubbed the plant with his hands without harming him, soon persuaded the stranger that the *Rhus* was deprived of its harmful properties in France. To prove this assertion, he took a handful of leaves, cut them up, and rubbed his hands and wrists with them, as he had done several times before without doing him the least harm. The stranger now thought I had been



only joking, and tried to repeat this before my students, rubbing *Rhus* leaves in his hands for a much longer time. But he would soon regret his rashness.

The next morning he complained of an unpleasant itching on his hands and wrists. He asked for advice from the student who took the itching to be a sign of scabies probably contracted on his last trip, and advised him to rub his hands and wrists with half an ounce of Unguentum citrinum that same day, with the intention of suppressing the disease, and to take Mercurial pills for purgation the following day.

This advice was followed; but the itching increased the following day, and both the hands and the wrist began to swell and a large number of small pustules appeared, which now confirmed him in the opinion that it was really scabies. The student, who was again asked for advice, was now pleased with his acumen, and had the affected parts rubbed with a double portion of ointment, in order to deal with the disease all the quicker.

The next day after the second application, the hands and wrists were still more swollen during the night and covered with a large number of small vesicles, which became filled with a yellowish moisture as they increased over seven or eight days.

Despite blood-letting, bathing, softening flatulence, and thinning drinks, the patient's head swelled so much, and with such extraordinary swelling of the eyelids, that he was deprived of sight for more than twenty-four hours. The itching afterwards extended to all parts of the body; It was especially severe on the hairy parts and the genitalia, which the patient scratched almost completely. After ten days the effects abated; the wrists, from which had come a lot of moisture, lost their epidermis, and the patient was very surprised when he noticed a tetter, which he had had one wrist for more than six years, had healed during his illness. ...

I started by trying the effects of infusions from this plant on myself. I didn't have any tetter; but I wanted to know how the *Rhus* affected the stomach. I therefore had a fresh leaf infused with a pound of boiling water, and of this I took a tablespoonful at first, morning and evening. Since I did not notice any effect from this dose, I increased the number of leaves to twelve, for the same quantity of water. At this dose, I felt mild pains in the stomach, and perspiration and urine were more frequent.

Second Observation – case of Maria Foucard (p.30):

From that time on she got better day by day, until June, 1788, when she developed jaundice compounded with a double three-day fever, from which she was cured by the usual means]

Hahnemann recruits the following six symptoms from Dufresnoy into *Rhus*:

102 Great swelling of the head, face and eyelids, so that he could not open them for more than 24 hours. [D₁₅]

115 Inflammation of the eyelids. [D₁₅]

343 Pain in the stomach. [D₁₅]

623 Erysipelas [Rothlauf], swelling, small vesicles* with burning and itching on the arms and hands. [F₁₂; D₁₅]

* Note here RA_{III} (vol.2) gave “Pusteln” (pustules), but both the original French (*petites vésicules*) & the English review (*small vesicles*) require we amend this to read *small vesicles*.

783 Itching all over the body, especially on the hairy parts, on the hairy scalp and genitals. [D₁₅]

911 Double tertian fever with jaundice. [D₁₅]

D₂₁ Du Roi, Johann Philipp: *Die Harbkesche Wilde Baumzucht*, Braunschweig, 1772, vol.2., p.308. [1 symptom]

From Du Roi we read (p.308):

“Der Saft oder ein frisch abgeschnittener Zweig macht, dass in heissen Tagen die damit berührte Glieder aufschwellen und empfindlich schmerzen. Hieselbst ist einen Arbeiter das Gesicht sehr angeschwollen, nachdem er ein Gartenmesser in den Mund nahm, mit dem er vorher einige Zweige dieses Baums abgeschnitten hatte.”

[On hot days the juice or a freshly cut twig makes the limb touched with it swell and become painfully sensitive. Here a worker's face was very swollen after a garden knife which he had used to cut off some branches of this tree was held in his mouth]

Hahnemann derives the following single symptom from this account:

103 Great swelling of the face. [D₂₁]



- F₁₂ Fontana, Felix: *Traité sur le Vénin de la Vipere, sur les Poisons Americains, sur le Laurier-Cerise, et sur quelques autres Poisons Vegetaux* (Sur le Toxicodendron, p.158), book review in *Medical Commentaries* (Andrew Duncan), Edinburgh, 1788, Decade 2, vol.2, p.110.¹¹ [6 symptoms]

Hahnemann cites this English book review of Fontana's work, which review appeared in Duncan's *Medical Commentaries*, under *Account of New Books*, wherein is given the following overview (pp.109-110):

M E D I C A L
COMMENTARIES,
FOR THE YEAR M,DCC,LXXXVIII.

EXHIBITING A CONCISE VIEW OF THE
LATEST AND MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES
IN MEDICINE AND MEDICAL PHILOSOPHY.

COLLECTED AND PUBLISHED BY
ANDREW DUNCAN, M.D.F.R. & A.S. ED.
PHYSICIAN TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES
FOR SCOTLAND,
FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, EDINBURGH,
AND MEMBER OF THE ROYAL SOCIETIES OF MEDICINE
OF PARIS, COPENHAGEN, EDINBURGH, &c.

Neglecta reducit, sparsa colligit, utilia selegit, necessaria ostendit, sic utile.
Baglivius.

DECADE SECOND.

V O L. II.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR C. ELLIOT, T. KAY, AND CO. AT
Dr Cullen's Head, N° 332, opposite Somerset-Place,
Strand, LONDON;
AND FOR C. ELLIOT, EDINBURGH.
M,DCC,LXXXVIII.

M E D I C A L DEC. II.

II.

Traité sur le Vénin de la Vipere, sur les Poisons Americains, sur le Laurier-Cerise, et sur quelques autres Poisons Vegetaux. On y a joint des Observations sur la Structure Primitive du Corps Animal. Par M. Felix Fontana, Physicien de S. A. R. l'Archiduc Grand-Duc de Toscane, et Directeur de son Cabinet d'Histoire Naturelle. 4to, Florence.

THE work now before us has justly claimed no inconsiderable share of the attention of philosophers, both for its originality and for the number of important discoveries which it contains: And these discoveries are not the production of a fanciful imagination, but the fruit of experiment. These experiments, which on the subject of the viper alone exceed six thousand in point of number, have been devised with singular ingenuity, executed

110 **M E D I C A L** DEC. II.

He slightly touched the back of his hand with a leaf of the toxicodendron, which he had cut near the stalk. It was with difficulty he could afterwards perceive the skin to be wet at the place where he had applied it. But three days after there appeared a dark spot, and in three days more his whole face began to swell, particularly the eye-lids and tips of the ears. He felt a severe burning for fifteen days, and an intolerable itching for fifteen more; and his hands were covered in different places with small vesicles filled with a transparent sharp humour. He had no fever, but his pulse was very quick. Nearly the same symptoms occurred on two other occasions, when he merely touched the leaves with his fingers, and that too at parts where they had not been cut, and where there could be no suspicion of milky juice.

To the experiments on the toxicodendron are subjoined some made on the oil of tobacco. He made a small incision in a pigeon's leg, and applied to it the oil of tobacco. In two minutes it lost the use of its foot. He applied it to a wound in the pectoral muscles of another pigeon; in three minutes the animal

“Mr Fontana next relates some experiments made on the toxicodendron, or poison tree as it has commonly been called. This some celebrated writers have regarded as a very strong poison, while others have held a contrary opinion. He found that both the juice and milk of the leaves are quite innocent to different animals, both when applied externally, when taken internally, and even when applied to wounds; but that a very small portion of the milky juice applied to the human skin, produces remarkable symptoms even on very remote parts. Indeed our author soon abandoned his inquiries on this subject, having had the misfortune to poison himself three times successively with the leaves of it.

He slightly touched the back of his hand with a leaf of the toxicodendron, which he had cut near the stalk. It was with difficulty he could afterwards perceive the skin to be wet at the place where he had applied it. But three days after there appeared a dark spot, and in three days more his whole face began to swell, particularly the eye-lids and tips of the ears. He felt a severe burning for fifteen days, and an intolerable itching for fifteen more; and his hands were covered in different places with small vesicles filled with a transparent sharp humour. He had no fever, but his pulse was very quick. Nearly the same symptoms occurred on two other occasions, when he merely touched the leaves with his fingers, and that too at parts where they had not been cut, and where there could be no suspicion of milky juice.”

From this account Hahnemann recruits six symptoms into his *Rhus* (RA) pharmacography:

104 Swelling of the face, especially of the eyelids and lobes of the ears. [F₁₂]

106 Violent burning on the swollen face, eyelids and earlobes. [F₁₂]

107 Intolerable itching on the swollen face, eyelids and earlobes. [F₁₂]

623 Erysipelas [Rothlauf], swelling, small vesicles* with burning and itching on the arms and hands. [F₁₂; D₁₅]

* Note here RA_{III} (vol.2) gave “Pusteln” (pustules), but both the original French (*petites vésicules*) & the English review (*small vesicles*) require we amend this to read *small vesicles*.

785 A black spot on the part touched by the juice (aft. 3d). [F₁₂]

942 Quick pulse. [F₁₂]

- G₁₆ Gleditsch, Johann Gottlieb: in *Beschäftigungen der Gesellschaft naturforschender Freunde*, Berlin, 1779, vol.4, p.299.¹² [1 symptom]

From Gleditsch we read (pp.298-300):

“Daß er das Eisen etwas angreife und auf leinewand und Papier solche dunkelbraune oder schwärzliche Flecke mache, welche sehr schwer oder gar nicht aus, gehen wollen, muß dabey nicht vergessen werden. ...

So gewiß also das erste zu seiner Zeit befunden wird, so zuverlässig sagt uns die Erfahrung, daß selbst der aufgestrichene Saft, oder wenn er in die bloße Haut eingerieben worden ist, so gar bey eben solchen, welchen er eine gute Zeit vorher niemals schädlich gewesen, doch hernach in einem andern Zustände geschadet, und wegen seiner heftigen Schärfe auf der Haut Blasen gezogen, auch dabey Entzündung gemacht, und eine schmerzhaftige Geschwulst erregt habe: wie dieses auch geschieht, wenn die Haut mit frischen Blättern, des Giftrebenstrauchs gerieben wird. Bey anderen, welche den Saft auf der Haut haben eintrocknen lassen, hat sich, nach Verlauf von 16 bis 24 Stunden, ein brauner Fleck ... get und das äußerst dünne Häutchen hat sich davon abgelöst. Noch schärfer ist die Wirkung, des frische aufgestiegenen Saftes in die Haut, bey einzelnen Personen gewesen, wo er diesem dermaassen angegriffen, daß sie nach etlichen Stunden schon angefangen schwarz und nach Art eines leders dicht und hart zuwerden, Mit Verlust des obern Häutchens. Ein geschickter Arzt zu Zülchow hat sich dabey, um die Schmerzen zu lindern, der austrocknenden Mittels mit gutem Erfolg bedienet.”

[It must not be forgotten that it attacks the iron somewhat and makes dark brown or blackish stains on linen and paper that are very difficult or impossible to remove. ... the juice spread or rubbed onto the bare skin, even in those for whom it had never been harmful for a good while before, but afterwards in another condition, and because of its violent sharpness, blistered the skin, caused inflammation and painful swelling: as happens when the skin is rubbed with fresh leaves of the poison vine bush. Others who allowed the juice to dry on their skin developed a brown spot after 16 to 24 hours ... and the extremely thin skin became detached. In some individuals, the effect of the freshly extracted sap upon the skin was much worse, to such an extent that after a few hours it began to turn black and thick and as hard as leather, with loss of the epidermis...]

Hahnemann thus derives the following symptom from Gleditsch into our *Rhus toxicodendron* pharmacography:

786 The parts of the skin touched by the juice became thick and hard [dicht und hart] like leather. [G₁₆]

- H₅₂ Hufeland, Christoph, Wilhelm (1762-1836): Von der Berührung des Giftbaums, *Rhus toxicodendron*... [from touching the poison tree, *Rhus tox*...], *Journal der practischen Arzneykunde und Wundarzeykunst*, Berlin, 1825, vol.61, no.4, p.28, item 5, *Pemphigus a veneno* [pemphigus from poisons]. [2 symptoms]

The two symptoms (below listed) first appear in RA_{III} (vol.2, 1833) citing: “[Hb. u. Ts. aus Huf. Journ. LXI. Bd. 4. Heft. S. 28 in reiner Arzneimittellehre von Hartlaub u. Trinks, 3r. Band.]” i.e., taken from an account in Hufeland’s *Journal* (1825, vol.61, no.4, p.28) through Hartlaub & Trinks’ RA (HTRA), and wherein (HTRA, 1831, vol.3, pp.360-361) is given the following footnote to *Wurzelsumach* [*Rhus*]:

“Die wenigen mit S. bezeichneten Symptome sind von D. *Schrèter* mitgeteilt, alle die übrigen aber durch äussere Anwendung des Arzneimittels entstanden und aus Hufel. Journal LXI. Bd. 4. Hft. S. 28. gezogen.”

The original account given in Hufeland’s *Journal* discusses *Von der Berührung des Giftbaums, Rhus toxicodendron*... [from touching the poison tree, *Rhus tox*...], wherefrom we read (pp.28-30):

“Von der *Berührung des Giftbaums, Rhus toxicodendron*, dessen Wirkung, mit denen des häufigeren *Rhus radicans*, und *Rhus vernix* ganz übereinkömmt (*Willdenow*). ...

Hr. *Krüger* stellte an sich selbst Versuche an, und schreibt die giftige Wirkung der Luft zu, welche sich beim Zerbrechen der Blätter und Stengel verbreitet. Das Abpflücken schadete ihm nur bei trüber Luft. Er bekam, obgleich er sich die Hände gewaschen, ein Fieber, welches beim 2ten Versuch so stark War, dass



sich Zuckungen hinzu gesellten. Tags darauf erschienen zuerst zwischen den Fingern, dann auf der ganzen Hand kleine *Bläschen*, welche ganz *Willans* Wasserblätterchen glichen, ausser dass mehr Geschwulst damit verbunden war. Den 2ten Tag schwellen die Genitalien, besonders das Scrotum und das Gesicht tympanitisch, mit vielem Jucken. — Am 4ten Tage vermehrte sich die Geschwulst so, dass die Finger nur mit Schmerzen gebogen werden konnten, die Augen sich schlossen, und beim 2ten Versuch selbst entzündet wurden. Gleichmässig schwellen Nase, Ohren, Hals, nur nicht der Haarkopf. Das vergrösserte Scrotum war wie mit Leder überzogen, die Eichel schmerzte, weil das geschwollene Praeputium eine Paraphimosis bildete. Dabei war viel Durst und Trockniss im Halse, und dennoch blieb der Puls langsam. Die Blasen, welche grösstentheils eine milchige, einige aber auch eine wasserhelle Feuchtigkeit enthielten, flossen zusammen. Dieser Zustand dauerte 3 Tage, dann schälte sich die Haut ab, nachdem auch noch an den Schienbeinen und Lenden ein Ausschlag mit Geschwulst und Härte, doch ohne Schmerzen, erschienen war. In 14 Tagen war alles vorüber. Beim 2ten Versuch war alles heftiger, auch die Paraphimosis fehlte nicht.

... Es lag mir aber sehr daran, hier noch genauere Aufschlüsse zu bekommen, deswegen zog ich bei unsern Hofgärtnern Erkundigungen ein, und diese ergaben: dass sie häufig eine Geschwulst nach der Berührung der *Rhus*-Arten beobachtet; der Garten-Inspector *Schweer* sah vor vielen Jahren unter andern in Reinsberg einen Jüngling, dessen Gesicht und Hände so davon aufgeschwollen, dass er in 8 Tagen die Augen gar nicht habe öffnen können, und sein Gesicht gar keine menschliche Gestalt gehabt habe. Von Geschwulst der Genitalien erinnerte er sich aber so wenig, als von eigentlichen Blasen, das Ansehn sei mehr wie bei der Nesselsucht gewesen. In Ludwigslust, wo das *Rhus* zur Deckung von Grotten häufig benutzt wird, erfahre man es alljährig, dass Mehrere, die sich damit beschäftigten, gar nicht litten, andere nur Schwindel, Augenweh erlitten, dagegen einige sogleich an allen, von Kleidern nicht bedeckten, Theilen Geschwulst bekämen.”

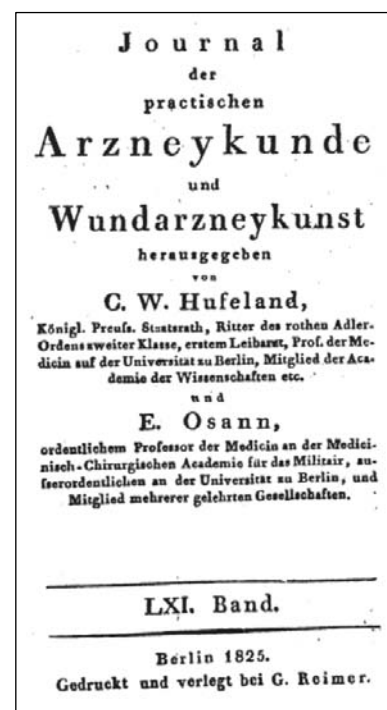
[Mr. Kruger experimented on himself, and attributes the toxic effect to the vapour which spread from breaking the leaves and stems. Plucking the plant affected him only in turbid (cloudy) air. Though he washed his hands, at the 2nd experiment he got a fever that was so strong that were accompanied by twitchings. The next day there appeared, first between his fingers then on the whole hand, small vesicles which resembled *Willans* “Wasserblätterchen”, but with greater swelling. The 2nd day the genitals, especially the scrotum, were swollen, and the face was tympanitic, with much itching. — On the 4th day, the swelling had increased so that the fingers could only be bent with pain, the eyes were closed, and were inflamed. There was uniform swelling of the nose, ears, neck, but not the hairy head. The enlarged scrotum was as if covered with leather, and the glans was painful because the swollen prepuce formed a paraphimosis. There was much thirst and dryness in the throat, and yet the pulse remained slow. The vesicles, which for the most part contained a milky, but some also a transparent liquid, coalesced. This condition lasted 3 days, then the skin peeled off, after which there appeared a rash on the shins and thighs, with swelling and hardness, but without pain. In 14 days it was all over.

... for me to get a better picture, I made inquiries of our yard gardener, who reported that they had frequently observed swelling after touching the *Rhus* species; the garden inspector *Schweer* saw many years ago, in Reinsberg, a youth, whose swollen face and hands were so swollen that he was unable to open his eyes for 8 days, and his face had no human form. ... In Ludwigslust, where the *Rhus* is often used to cover caves, we learn there that there are those who handle it but do not suffer, others only get dizziness, or eye pains, but on the other hand there are those who would immediately get swelling on all parts not covered with clothes.]

Hahnemann recruits the following two symptom into his *Rhus* tox. pharmacography:

17 Vertigo. [H₅₂]

109 Stiffness and swelling of the face. [H₅₂]



K_{2.1} Kalm, Pehr (1716-1779): *En Resa til Norra America*, Stockholm, 1761, vol.3, pp.47-48; *Travels into North America* (Tr. Forster, J.R.), London, 2nd ed., 1772, vol.1. pp.139-140. [1 symptom]

Citation error: Hahnemann (from (vol.2: RA_I [299], RA_{II} (318), RA_{III} 788) cites Robert Dossie's *Institutes of Experimental Chemistry*, London, 1759 [without specific page number]). But in that work we find only the following mentions (volume 2):

“The SULPHUREOUS SAP is formed of dissolved resins, united with ethereal oil, that flies off very soon when the sap is exposed to the air, and leaves, in some cases, the resinous matter incapable of being again dissolved by any known menstruum. This kind of sap is afforded by several kinds of plants, but particularly in many of the coniferous tribe: and in an extraordinary manner in some species of the toxicodendron or poison oak; which being cut with a knife,

imparts to it a juice, at first not of a very thick consistence; but which, soon drying, incrusts the knife with a hard varnish, not easily to be taken off, even by scraping.” (p.9)

“... there is very good authority for believing, that, in China, and Japan, the common black varnish, which we see so frequently under the name of the Japan laquer, is no other than the sulphureous sap of a species of this kind of tree ... their deleterious qualities render them fatally pernicious to those who are concerned with them: as not only appears, from the accidents that have happened in America, where there are several species of them, to those who have incautiously burnt, or handled the wood; but from the effects of the varnish itself, formed of the sap that has been brought hither. ... For this varnish has been extremely noxious to all the workmen, who have had any concern with it: insomuch, that, notwithstanding very considerable benefits would arise to some manufacturers from its use, they are obliged to desist from it, on account of the want of workmen who are willing to undertake, even at any rate, to apply it.” (pp.63-64)

Dossie mentions something similar in his *The Handmaid to the Arts* (London, 1764), wherein he writes (vol.2, pp.408-409):

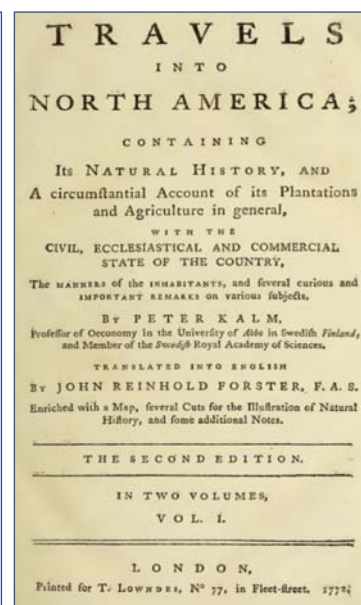
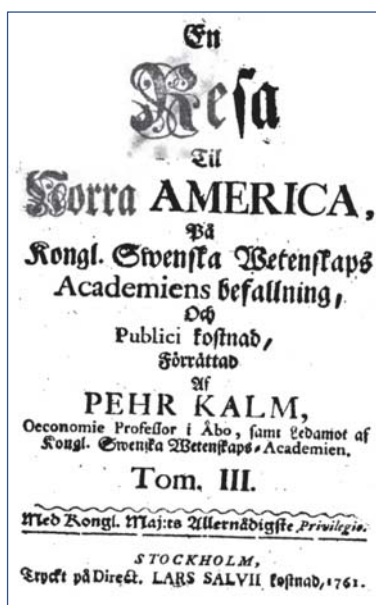
“The true Japan black laquer (which is now frequently brought from China) has been sometimes used for the varnishing snuff-boxes, cups, and all such pieces made of the paper or saw-dust. But this laquer, being the concreted juice of the toxicodendron tree, its poisonous qualities are almost constantly fatal to those who work with it for any length of time; and sometimes even on very slight inter-meddling with it. Such a momentous inconvenience, together with the tediousness of dispatching the work, on account of its great tardiness in drying, being extremely good reasons against its use, it is much more adviseable to employ the common kinds of varnish, which, when managed judiciously, may be rendered nearly both as beautiful and durable, without either the danger or the difficulty attending the other.”

But nowhere do we find mention of the specific effect which Hahnemann cites to Dossie. Our wider search uncovered the symptom looked for reported by Pehr Kalm, in his *Travels into North America* (Tr. Forster, J.R.), London, 2nd ed., 1772, vol.1. Talking on the *Rhus radicans* (in Philadelphia, October 1748), Kalm writes (pp.139-140):

“The *Rhus radicans* is a shrub or tree which grows abundantly in this country, and has in common with the ivy, called *Hedera arborea*, the quality of not growing without the support either of a tree, a wall, or a hedge. ... When the Item is cut, it emits a pale brown sap of a disagreeable scent. This sap is so sharp, that the letters and characters made upon linen with it, cannot be got out again, but grow blacker the more the cloth is washed. Boys commonly marked their names on their linen with this juice. If you write with it on paper, the letters never go out, but grow blacker from time to time.

This species of Sumach has the same noxious qualities as the poisonous sumach, or Poison-tree, which I have above described, being poisonous to some people though not to every one. Therefore all that has been said of the poison-tree is likewise applicable to this; excepting that the former has the stronger poison. However, I have seen people who have been as much swelled from the noxious exhalations of the latter, as they could have been from those of the former. I likewise know, that of two sisters, the one could manage the tree without being affected by its venom, though the other immediately felt it as soon as the exhalations of the tree came near her, or whenever she came a yard too near the tree, and even when she stood in the way of the wind, which blew directly from this shrub. But upon me this species of sumach has never exerted its power; though I made above a hundred experiments upon myself with the greatest stems, and the juice once squirted into my eye, without doing me any harm. On another person's hand, which I had covered very thick with it, the skin, a few hours after, became as hard as a piece of tanned leather, and peeled off in the following days, as if little scales fell from it.”

We see the symptom recruited by Hahnemann into RA is indeed reported by Kalm, from his own observations whilst in Philadelphia in October 1748, and we have thence corrected the citation to Kalm [K_{2.1}] (not Dossie), viz.:



787 The juice makes the skin it touches hard like tanned leather; after some days the indurated parts desquamated. [K_{2.1}]

We also here append the following interesting account from Joseph Taylor, *The wonders of trees, plants, and shrubs...*, London, 1823, we read (pp.52-54):

“*The Rhus Vernix, or Poison Ash.*”

The Poison Ash grows naturally in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Carolina, and Japan, rising with a strong woody stalk to the height of twenty feet and upwards; though in this country it is seldom seen above twelve, by reason of the plant's being extremely tender. The bark is brown, inclining to grey; the branches are garnished with winged leaves, composed of three or four pair of lobes, terminated by an odd one. The lobes vary greatly in their shape, but for the most part they are oval and spear-shaped. The footstalks become of a bright purple towards the latter part of summer, and, in autumn, all the leaves are of a beautiful purple before they fall off. Professor Kalm says, “an incision being made into the tree, a whitish yellow juice, which has a nauseous smell, comes out between the bark and the wood. This tree is not known for its good qualities, but greatly so for the effect of its poison; which, though it is noxious to some people, yet does not in the least affect others; and, therefore, one person can handle the tree as he pleases, cut it, peel off its bark, rub it, or the wood, upon his hands, smell it, spread the juice upon his skin, and make more experiments, with no inconvenience to himself. Another person, on the contrary, dares not meddle with the tree, while its wood is fresh, nor can he venture to touch a hand which has handled it, nor even to expose himself to the smoke of a fire which is made with this wood, without soon feeling its bad effects; for the face, the hands, and frequently the whole body, swells excessively, and is affected with very acute pain. Sometimes bladders or blisters arise in great plenty, and make the sick person look as if he was infected with the leprosy. In some people, the external thin skin peels off in a few days, as is the case when a person has scalded or burnt any part of his body. Nay, the nature of some persons will not even allow them to approach the place where the tree grows, or to expose themselves to the wind when it carries the effluvia, or exhalation, of this tree with it, without letting them feel the inconvenience of the swelling just described. Their eyes are sometimes shut up for one or two, or more days together, by the swelling. I know (says the Professor) two brothers, one of whom could, without danger, handle this tree in what manner he pleased, whereas the other could not come near it without swelling. I have known old people who were more afraid of this tree than of a viper, and I was acquainted with a person, who, merely by the noxious exhalations of it, was swelled to such a degree, that he was as stiff as a log of wood, and could only be turned about in sheets. In some places this tree is rooted out, on purpose that its poison may not affect the workmen. The natives are said to distinguish this tree in the dark, by its extreme coldness to the touch, and the inspissated juice of this tree is said to be the fine varnish of Japan.”

- L₉ Lavini: in Orfila, M.P., *Traité des Poisons ou Toxicologie Générale*, Paris, 3rd ed., vol.1. p.725. Translated into a second German edition by O.B.Kühn as *Orfila's Allgemeine Toxicologie*, Leipzig, 1839, wherein we read (vol.2, pp. 596-597). [1 symptom]

Citation error: This single symptom appears for the first time in *Rhus*.RA_{III} 758, mistakenly citing “*Cavini* bei *Orfila* I. 596, 597”. *Orfila* first mentions *Lavini* in his 3rd edition *Toxicologie...* published in 1826,* but it appears on p.730 (under *Observations*), i.e., not on pp.596-597.

* This explains why this observation of Lavini was not included in RA_I (1816) or RA_{II} (1824) which were published earlier

We then discovered this very account was translated into a second German edition by O.B.Kühn as *Orfila's Allgemeine Toxicologie*, Leipzig, 1839, vol.2, pp. 596-597, which page numbers correspond precisely with those cited in RA_{III}. This evidences Hahnemann referred to Kühn's German translation rather than the original (3rd ed.) of Orfila, itself most likely unavailable to Hahnemann (during his Köthen residency). From Kühn we read (pp.596-597):

“3) Herr *Lavini* behauptet vom Saft des *Rhus toxicodendron* Wirkungen gesehen zu haben, die sich in mehr facher Beziehung von den eben angeführten unterscheiden. Nachdem er, wie *Fontana*, gesehen hatte, daß man einige Tropfen von diesem Saft in den Magen von Meerschweinchen und Vögeln einbringen könne, so brachte er zwei Tropfen auf das erste Glied seines Zeigefingers, einige Linien von einander entfernt; er ließ sie daselbst zwei Minuten und bemerkte, daß sie nach einer Stunde zwei schwarze Flecken erzeugt hatten. Fünf und zwanzig Tage darauf zeigten sich auf einmal folgende Symptome: starkes Brennen im Munde und der Kehle; schnell zunehmendes Aufschwellen der linken Wange, Oberlippe und Augenlieder; in der folgenden Nacht Anschwellen der Vorderarme, welche das Doppelte ihres natürlichen Umfangs erreicht hatten, lederartige Haut, unerträgliches Jucken, sehr starker Hitze. Vier



Tage darauf kamen auf den Händen und besonders den Vorderarmen einige Pusteln zum Vorschein, die denen des Gallapfels (de la galle) ziemlich ähnlich waren; einige von ihnen gaben beim Aufplatzen eine helle Feuchtigkeit von sich, die, auf den Vorderarm eingimpst, wieder andere Pusteln erzeugte. Die Stelle des Gliedes, worauf der milchige Saft gebracht war, zeigte zwei dicke, erbsengrosse, Geschwülste, welche später sich wieder zertheilen, ohne aufzubrechen. Nach acht Tagen folgte Abschuppung der Epidermis des Vorderarms und eines Theils des Gesichts. Das Jucken dauerte noch mehrere Tage fort. Alle diese Symptome wichen endlich wahrscheinlich auf die äusserliche Anwendung von Eis.*") (*) Journal de Chimie médicale, juin 1825.)

[3] Mr. *Lavini* claims to have seen effects from the juice of *Rhus toxicodendron* which differ in several respects from those just mentioned. After seeing, like *Fontana*, that a few drops of this juice could be placed in the stomachs of guinea pigs and birds, he placed two drops on the first joint of his index finger, a few lines apart; he left them there two minutes, and noticed that after an hour they had caused two black spots. Twenty five days later the following symptoms suddenly appeared: severe burning in the mouth and throat; rapidly increasing swelling of left cheek, upper lip and eyelid; the following night swelling to twice their natural size of the forearms, leathery skin, intolerable itching, very intense heat. Four days later some pustules appeared on the hands, and especially the forearms, rather resembling those of the gall-apple (de la galle); some of them, when they burst, gave off a light-coloured moisture, which, when inoculated into the forearm, produced other pustules. The part of the limb to which the milky juice had been applied showed two thick, pea-sized tumors, which later divided again without breaking open. After eight days there followed desquamation of the epidermis of the forearm and part of the face. The itching continued for several days. All these symptoms eventually subsided, probably, upon the external application of ice]

As cited by Orfila, we find this symptom described in the first volume of *Journal de Chimie Médicale, de Pharmacie, et de Toxicologie*, Paris, 1825, vol.1, in an article: *Sur les Emanations deleteres qui s'exhalent du Rhus toxicodendron* [The deleterious vapours emanating from *Rhus tox.*]; par. *M. Lavini, professeur-adjoint de chimie pharmaceutique a l'Universite de Turin*.

Hahnemann derives the following single symptom into *Rhus* from *Lavini*:

757 On applying the juice to the first phalanx of the index finger there appear two black spots after an hour, but twenty-five days afterwards severe burning in the mouth and throat, rapid swelling of the left cheek, upper lip, and eyelids; the following night great swelling of the forearm, the skin becomes of a leather character, and there occur intolerable itching and very great heat. After four days pustules on the hands and forearms, which burst and exude a clear fluid. [L₉]

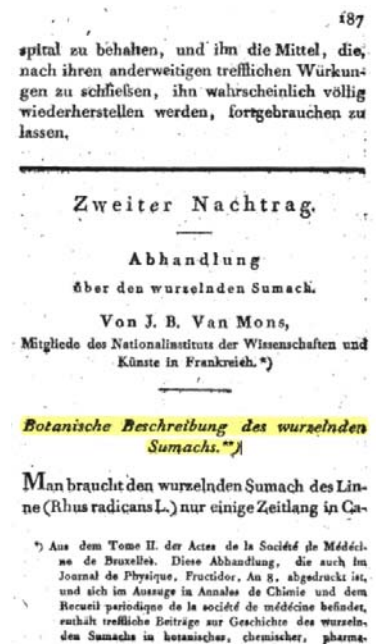
M₃₈ Mons, J.B. van: Abhandlung über den wurzelnden Sumach [Treatise on the [poison] Sumac root], in Dufresnoy, A., *Erfahrungen über die heilsame Anwendung des wurzelnden Sumachs, der gelben Narcisse und des Pfefferschwamms*, Halle, 1801, Appendix 2, pp.205-207. [2 symptoms]

From Mons we read (in Dufresnoy, pp.205-207):

“Die Wirkungen des Sumachs in unserm Klima sind nicht ganz die nemlichen. Selbst bei sehr empfindlichen Personen erregt der Sumach, wenn sie sich nur einige Minuten lang bei Abwesenheit der Sonnenstrahlen seiner Ausdünstung aussetzen, die meiste Zeit nur Jucken am Halse und am Vorderarme, das aber in wenigen Stunden vergeht. In diesem Falle äußert sich die Wirkung in weniger als einer Viertelstunde. Pflücken jene Personen Blätter oder schütteln sie das Laub des Sumachs, so bekommen sie auf den Händen und nachher auch auf den Armen Pusteln, die man meistens für Krätze ansieht. Grade wenn man diesen Ausschlag los zu sein glaubt, zeigt er sich auf den untern Extremitäten längs den Beinen und mehr oder weniger auf den Schenkeln, und nachher auf der Brust und zuweilen auch im Gesichte. Gewöhnlich dauert er drei bis vier Decaden lang, (vier bis sechs Wochen,) und meistens kommt er erst in der Zeit vom achten bis zehnten Tage nach der Ansteckung zum Vorschein.

Oft äußert das Gift seine ganze Würksamkeit auf den Kopf, der als denn noch einmal so dick wird, als er sonst zu sein pflegt. Mein verstorbener Bruder war so verwegen, sich der nemlichen Gefahr zu drei verschiedenen Malen auszusetzen, indem er die Blätter von einem großen Baume abpflückte, der in meines Vaters Garten stand. Jedesmal folgte jene widrige Krankheit gleich auf seine unbesonnene Handlung und beinahe einen Monat lang mußte er das Bett hüten. Mir sind drei andere Personen bekannt, bei denen die Ausdünstung des Sumachs die nemlichen Zufälle erregt. ...”

[The effects of the *Rhus* in our climate are not quite the same. Even in very sensitive persons, if exposed to its vapour for a few minutes in the absence of the sun's rays, most of the time it excites, usually within a quarter of an hour, itching of the neck and forearms and which passes in a few hours. If these people pick shake the leaves of the *Rhus*,



they get pustules on their hands and later on their arms, which are commonly mistaken for scabies. Just when one thinks to be rid of this eruption, it appears on the lower extremities along the legs and more or less on the thighs, and afterwards on the chest and sometimes also on the face. It usually lasts four to six weeks, and mostly appears between eight and ten days after exposure.

Often the poison exerts its full effect on the head, which becomes thicker than usual. My late brother was so bold as to expose himself to the same danger on three separate occasions, by picking the leaves from a large tree in my father's garden. He had an adverse reaction each time, and was confined to bed for nearly a month. I know of three others in whom the *Rhus* vapours caused the same effects. ...]

Hahnemann derives the following 2 symptoms from *Mons* into *Rhus toxicodendron*:

100 Great swelling of the face; the head is twice as big; a kind of phlegmonous pustular erysipelas [phlegmonöse Blatterrose], which compels him to keep his bed for four weeks. [M₃₈] *

* (From the emanations of the plant and from plucking it.)

560 Itching on the neck and on the forearms. [M₃₈]

M₄₀ Monti, Josephus: De plantis venenatis [The Poisonous plants], in *De Bononiensi Scientiarum et Artium Instituto Atque Academia Commentarii* [Bologna Institute of Sciences and the Arts Commentaries,] Bononiæ, 1755, vol.3, p.163. [1 symptom]

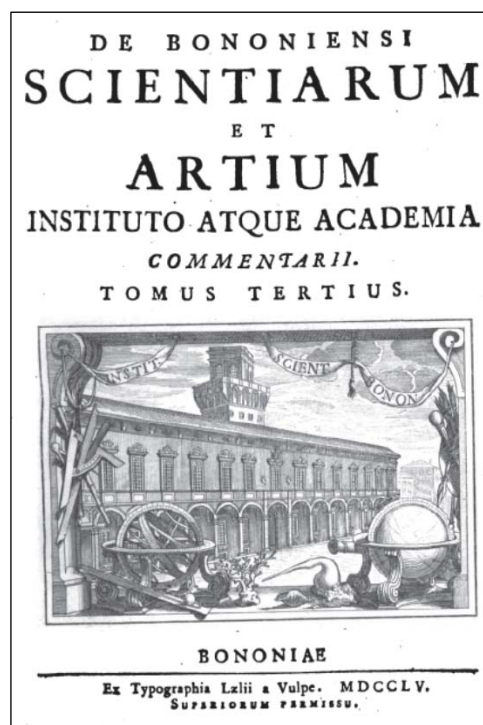
From Monti's account we read (p.163):

“Autumni advenerat tempus, quo nullam aptius, nullumquæ opportunis est ad viridaria in ordinem redigenda, & stirpes quascunquæ convenientibus in locis, vel collocandas, vel transferendas; quapropter una cum nato meo minore totus eram, ut ipsi, quæ sequentibus diebus perficienda essent, demonstrarem. In pæterlapsa enim æstate plantæ plures admodum excreverant, locumque ipsis statum prætergressæ erant, ex quo non paucae erant circumdodendæ. Inter has toxicodendron quidem ceteris præstabat, quapropter dum ipse, & rhizotomus ad alias coercendas intenti essemus, filius toxicodendri areolam falcicula superfluous ipsius ramos sponte sua circumcindebat. Cum viderim, tam libere illam contrectare stirpem, ipsum monere non destiti, ut memor saltem esset ipsius toxicodendri, hoc est toxicæ arboris nominis; id vero jocose dixi, & potius, ut soleo, ut nomen plantæ altius in memoriam defigeret, quam quod de hac planta suspicaret; innocuam quippe, saltem quoad tactum, ut dixi, eam reputabam. Verum vix duodecim elapsis horis filii manus maculis nigris undequaque infectæ cernuntur, circa quas rubedo quædam non sine levi pruritu observabatur. Id autem adeo crevit, ac se se diffudit, ut, vigintiquatuor horarum spatio, facies tota, & maxime oculi atque os, rubore, & pruritu contumaci externe affligerentur. Altera die in manibus, & vultu per plurimam deteguntur pustulæ, quæ inter se confluentes miliarem herpetum præ se feberant.”

[The time of autumn has come, in which there is no more suitable or opportune time for the gardens to be organized, and any stock which may be conveniently placed, or transferred; therefore I was wholly alone with my younger son, so that I might demonstrate to him the things which were to be accomplished in the following days. A great number of plants had grown through the summer, and had spread beyond their established position. Among these, toxicodendron surpassed the others, and as a result, while I myself and the root cutter were eager to control the others, my son freely cut around the garden bed with his own scythe. As I saw that I was able to handle the stock freely, I did not stop to warn him but to remember the name toxicodendron means poisonous tree. But I said this in jest, and that the name of the plant may be more deeply remembered than that which I suspected concerning this plant; for, as I said, I considered it harmless, at least as to the touch. But scarcely twelve hours elapsed when the child's hands were stained with black spots on every side, surrounded with a particular redness, but without even a slight itching. And this increased and spread so much, that, after the space of twenty-four hours, the whole face, and especially the eyes and mouth, were externally afflicted with redness and obstinate itching. The next day we detected very many pustules on the hands and face, which coalesced to form a miliary herpes]

Hahnemann derives the following single symptom from *Monti* into *Rhus toxicodendron*:

779 Black pustules with inflammation and itching, which in a short time spread all over the body. [M₄₀]



- N₁ Nasse, C.F.: mentioning Zadig, in Dufresnoy, A., *Erfahrungen über die heilsame Anwendung des wurzelnden Sumachs, der gelben Narcisse und des Pfefferschwamms*, Halle, 1801, Foreword, p.vi. [1 symptom]

The original French work of A. Dufresnoy was translated into German by C.F. Nasse, and it the foreword of Nasse which Hahnemann cites. Nasse writes (Foreword, p.vi):

“Hr. Zadig sowol, als der Recensent in der Salzburger Zeitung, und, wie dieser versichert, noch mehrere andere Aerzte wendeten die gedörrten und gepulverten Blätter des *Rhus toxicodendron* bei Lähmungen der Extremitäten und innerer Organe an; allein ohne allen Erfolg für die Heilung der gelähmten Kranken. Die nemliche Erfahrung habe ich selbst bei zwei an den untern Enden gelähmten Personen gemacht, welche ich die gepulverten Toxicodendron-blätter gebrauchen liess; die aber ausser einer ziemlich lebhaften Formication in den gelähmten Theilen nicht die geringste Veränderung verspürten.”

[Mr. Zadig both, as the reviewer in the Salzburg newspaper, and that he assures even more friendlier physicians used the dried and powdered leaves of *Rhus* in paralysis of the limbs and internal organs alone without any success in the healing of paralyzed patients. I myself have experienced the same thing with two paralysed patients who I let use the powdered Toxicodendron leaves; but apart from a rather lively formication in paralyzed parts they did not feel the slightest change.]

From this account Hahnemann takes the following single symptom from this account into *Rhus* for RA:

773 Severe formication in the paralysed parts. [N₁]

- S₄₀ Sherard, William: A farther Account of the Same Tree [Poyson-Wood], in *The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, London, 1720-1721 vol.31, pp.147-148. [2 symptoms]

Hahnemann cites Sherard in Dufresnoy, A., *Erfahrungen über die heilsame Anwendung des wurzelnden Sumachs, der gelben Narcisse und des Pfefferschwamms*, Halle, 1801, wherein Dufresnoy mentions (pp.204-205):

“Sherard erzählt nach More’s Nachrichten, dass von fünf oder sechs Personen, die zusammen um ein Feuer vom Holze des wurzelnden Sumachs sitzen, einige in Ohnmacht fallen, andere zu gähnen anfangen, ein paar sich hingegen immer in der Gesellschaft finden, die nicht die mindeste Veränderung in ihrem Körper bemerken.”

[“Sherard relates More’s report, that of five or six people sitting together around a fire from the wood of the Sumac root, some would faint, others started to yawn, however, but there were always a few who were unaffected.”]

From this account Hahnemann derives the following two symptoms into *Rhus*:

790 Some fell into syncope. [S₄₀] *

* (From fumigation with the wood of *rhus radicans*, in five or six persons)

827 Some were attacked by yawning. [S₄₀]

Sherard’s original account immediately follows that of Dudley. From Sherard we read (pp.147-148):

“The Account I had of the Poyson-Tree from Mr. More (which probably he had from Mr. Dudley) is as follows.

The Poison-Tree grows to the bigness of Elder; I never saw the Leaf; the Wood is as cold as ice; when laid on the Fire, of 5 or 6 Persons sitting by it, some will fall a swooning, fainting, or yawning, continuing so for some Days, others but a few hours, and others of the Company not at all. I handle, cut and burn it with impunity; and so it is with several others, I suppose, according to their several constitutions. It was never known to kill any body, but only to do hurt to some Persons. I have sent you all the Seeds of it, I can get.

The Seeds he sent were but few, but I had a good quantity from Mr. Catesby in Carolina. He calls it a Water Shrub, of which he never saw Leaf or Flower. Tis species of *Toxicodendron*, tho’ not named by Dr. Tournefort in his Institutions...”

(vi)

öffentlich erklärt. Beide nicht zu Gunsten des neuen Mittels. (Man vergleiche *Hufelands Journal*, B. 5. S. 688. und *med. chir. Zeitung* 1801, B. 1. S. 106.) Hr. Zadig sowol, als der Recensent in der Salzburger Zeitung, und, wie dieser versichert, noch mehrere andere Aerzte wendeten die gedörrten und gepulverten Blätter des *Rhus toxicodendron* bei Lähmungen der Extremitäten und innerer Organe an; allein ohne allen Erfolg für die Heilung der gelähmten Kranken. Die nemliche Erfahrung habe ich selbst bei zwei an den untern Enden gelähmten Personen gemacht, welche ich die gepulverten Toxicodendron-blätter gebrauchen liess; die aber außer einer ziemlich lebhaften Formication in den gelähmten Theilen nicht die geringste Veränderung verspürten.]

Wie sehr verschieden von diesen Erfahrungen sind die Beobachtungen französischer, englischer und deutscher Aerzte, in Ansehung der Wirksamkeit des wurzelnden Sumachs! Nicht blos ein einziger Arzt, sondern die Schriften mehrerer Männer, eines Dufresnoy, Kok, Anderson und Van Mons, empfeh-

(147)

VI. A farther Account of the same Tree. By William Sherard, LL. D. R. S. S.

THE Account I had of the Poyson-Tree from Mr. More (which probably he had from Mr. Dudley) is as follows.

The Poyson-Tree grows to the bigness of Elder; I never saw the Leaf; the Wood is as cold as ice; when laid on the Fire, of 5 or 6 Persons sitting by it, some will fall a swooning, fainting, or yawning, continuing so for some Days, others but a few Hours, and others of the Company not at all. I handle, cut and burn it with impunity; and so it is with several others, I suppose, according to their several Constitutions. It was never known to kill any body, but only to do hurt to some Persons. I have sent you all the Seeds of it, I can get.

The Seeds he sent were but few, but I had a good quantity from Mr. Catesby in Carolina. He calls it a Water Shrub, of which he never saw Leaf or Flower. Tis a species of *Toxicodendron*, tho’ not nam’d by Dr. Tournefort in his Institutions, p. 610. but I believe it to be *Arbor Americana alatis foliis, succo lacteo venenata*. Pluknet. Almag. 45. Tab. 145. Fig. 1. which is a Species of *Toxicodendron*, that grew formerly at Chelsea Garden. What makes me think it to be this, is Mr. Dudley’s writing ‘tis like a Sumach, and that it is by some call’d the Swamp Sumach; this in its manner of growing and alated Leaves, very much

- S₇₃ Sybel: Über die heilsamen Wirkung des *rhus radicans* in Lähmungen, in *Allgemeine Medizinische Annalen* (*Annalen der Heilkunde*) [General Medical Annals [Annals of Medicine]], Altenburg, 1811, July, p.638. [2 symptoms]

Hahnemann cites “Sybel, in *Medic. Annal.* 1811. Jul.” This journal had two title-pages: *Allgemeine Medizinische Annalen*, and *Annalen der Heilkunde*. In the July, 1811 issue, on pages 638-639, we find the following account:

“Eine schwächliche Frau zwischen 50 und 60 Jahren, Mutter vieler Kinder, hatte lange Zeit am Magenkrampf gelitten, als vor 2 Jahren sich eine Schwäche der untern Hälfte des Körpers einfand, welche das Gefühl bei der Kranken erweckte, als wäre sie in der Gegend des Zwerchfells in zwei Hälften getheilt. Der Gebrauch der untern Extremitäten ging verloren, und sie wurden, so wie der Bauch und das Kreuz, in dem Grade fühllos, dass weder Reiben, Drücken, noch Stechen in ihnen empfunden wurde; weder der Mastdarm, noch die Urinblase verrichteten ihre Functionen.

Die Blätter des wurzelnden Sumachs wurden zu 1 Drachme im Aufguss von 1 Pfund gegeben, und mit denselben allmählich bis zu Dose von 7 Drachmen gesteigen. Die Kranke empfand darauf keine Magenbeschwerden, aber schon nach einigen Tagen ein Jucken über den ganzen Körper, die benaarten Theile des Kopfs und die Flächen der Hände und Füße ausgenommen, worauf ein Ausschlag kleiner, mit Wasser gefüllten Bläschen, mit Röthe der Haut und heftigem Brennen derselben folgte. Abwechselnd liessen diese Zufälle nach und es entstanden schorfige Krusten, welche sich mit der Oberhaut ablös'ten; bald aber kam der Ausschlag wieder, und verliess die Kranke währendd der Ganzen Cur nicht wieder. Allmählich kehrte nun in den leidenden Theilen die natürliche Wärme mit dem vorigen Leben derselben zurück, die Kranke empfand in den gelähmten Theilen ein immer zunehmendes sanftes Prickeln, und nach 6 Monate lang fortgesetztem Gebrauch des Mittels war die Kranke so weit hergestellt, dass selbige im Zimmer herumgehen und ihrer kleinen Wirthschaft wieder vorstehen konnte. Bloss der Mangel an dem Mittel verhinderte die fernere Fortsetzung der Cur. Von dem übel war jedoch nur noch einige Schäche in den gelähmt gewesen Theilen rückständig.

In einem frühren Falle hatte es Hr. S. Durch den Gebrauch des Sumachs in Pulver und Extractform bei einem an den untern Extremitäten völlig gelähmten Mnne doch wenigstens so weit gebracht, dass derselbe an einem gespannten Seile im Garten auf- und absugehn vermochte. Die gute Wirkung des Mittels zeigte sich hier, ohne Ausschlag und Hautentzündung hervorzubringen.”

[A frail woman between 50 and 60 years of age, mother of many children, had long suffered from stomach cramps, when 2 years ago there was weakness in the lower half of the body, which made her feel as if divided into two halves from the level of the diaphragm. She lost the use of her lower extremities, which, like the abdomen and sacrum, became so numb that no rubbing, pressing, or stinging was felt in them; neither the rectum nor the urinary bladder performed their functions.

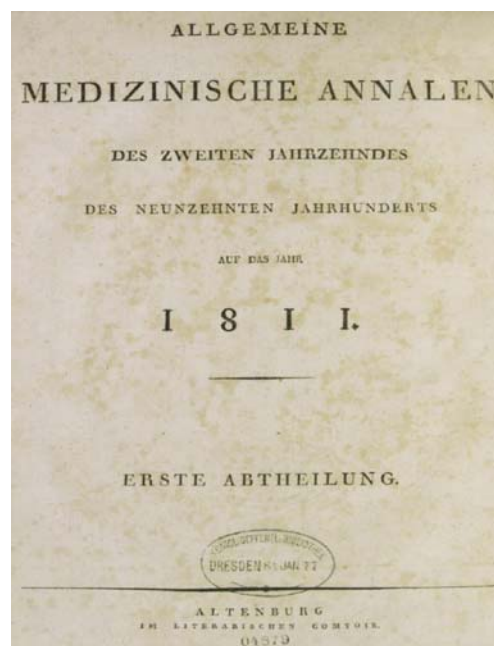
The leaves of the *Rhus toxicodendron* were given in the proportion of 1 drachm [60 g] in an infusion of 1 pound [450 g], gradually increased to a dose of 7 drachms [420g]. The patient did not experience any stomach problems, but after a few days began to itch all over her body, except for the hairy parts of the head and surfaces of the hands and feet, followed by an eruption of small, water-filled vesicles, with redness and violent burning of the skin. Intermittently, these effects subsided and scabby crusts developed, which came off with the epidermis; but soon the eruption returned, and did not leave the patient during the whole course of treatment. Gradually the natural warmth of the former life returned in the affected parts, the patient felt an ever increasing gentle tingling in the paralyzed parts, and after 6 months of continued use of the remedy she had improved so much that she could walk about the room and preside over her small domestic duties again. Only a lack of the remedy prevented further continuation of the cure. However, there remained only a few remnants of the disease in the parts that had been paralyzed.

In an earlier case, Mr. S. through the use of *Rhus toxicodendron* in the form of powder and extract in a man who was completely paralyzed in the lower extremities, he was at least able to walk up and down in the garden with the aid of a taught rope. In this case the good effect of the remedy occurred without producing inflammation of the skin or eruptions]

From this account Hahnemann derives the following two symptoms into *Rhus toxicodendron*:

780 Scabby eruption all over the body. [S₇₃]

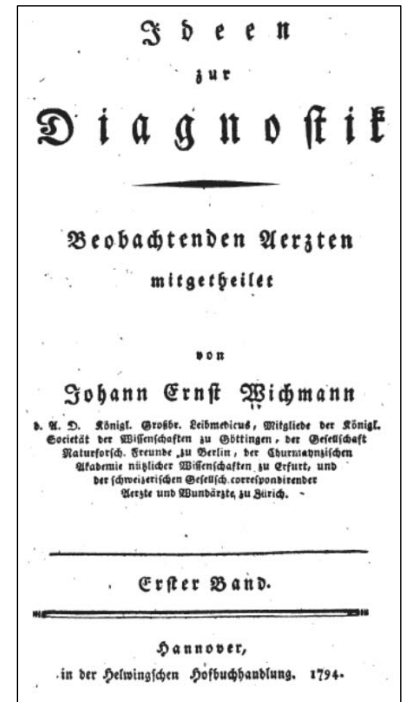
781 Burning eruption of small vesicles filled with water, and redness of the skin all over the body, except on the hairy scalp, the palms and soles. [S₇₃]



W₃₀ Wichmann, Johann, Ernst: *Ideen zur Diagnostik* [Diagnostic ideas], Hannover, 1794, vol.1, §20, p.74. [1 symptom]

From *Wichmann* we read (pp.74-77)

“Einer meiner Freunde, ein Mann von etwa 40 Jahren, wurde in Sommer plötzlich, ohne vorhergehendes Erbrechen, Uebelkeit, Fieber oder vergleichen von einem sehr peinlichen, heftig brennenden und juckenden Ausschlage befallen, der sich vorzüglich am Hodensacke, and der Vorhaut, and der Augenliedern, und Augen zeigte, an diesen Theilen zugleich blasse Geschwulst erregte, und in kleinen gelblichen Bläschen bestand, die hie und da zusammenliessen, nässeten, auch einzeln auf den Armen und Lenden nach einigen Tagen, wie Linsen gross, standen, und durch das Kratzen des Kranken ausseuerten. Viele dieser grössern Pusteln oder Schwären gingen langsam in Eiterung über, hatten einen rothen Hof, wurden breiter, und heilten langsamer (in der dritten Woche) da die kleinern zusammenlaufenden Pusteln geschwinder trockeneten, und in wenigen Tagen abschilferten. Ich kann diesen Ausschlag mit keinem andern besser vergleichen, und er hat mit keinem, in Betracht der dadurch erregten heftigen bennenden Schmerzen, des unausstehlichen Juckens, des langsamen Vertrocknens, der daher entstehenden Schlaflosigkeit, eine grössre Aehnlichkeit, als mit dem sogenannten Gürtel, oder höllischen Feuer (Cingulum, Zona, Zoster) nur mit dem grossen Unterschiede, dass der Gürtel sich ganz allein, caracteristisch, auf eine Seit des Leibes einschränket, neimals über einen halben Cirkel macht, und mit Fieber verbunden ist, dahingegen dieser Ausschlag mehrere Stellen des Körpers einnahm, und langsam weiter Schlich.



Ich war eben im Begriffe, beim Kranken aus der Nosologie zu erklären, unter welche Classe von krankheiten sein Ausschlag gehöre, was dazu könne Anlass gegeben haben als er mir mit der schärfsten botanischen Genauigkeit die Entdeckung machte, dass er eine Pflanze für die Ursache dieses Zufalls ansehe, die er in seinem Garten vor 24 Stunden ausgerottet, also viel berührt habe, zumal mit einem etwas verwundeten Finger. Spuren dieser Pflanze, z. C. Schwarze Flecken in Leinwand, waren auch zugleich da, und es blieb gar kein Zweifel übrig, dass der eben beschriebene seltene Ausschlag, der den Kranken, obgleich ohne Fieber, ausser Stand setzte, ausser Bette zu seyn, eine Wirkung, nicht der verschluckten, sondern berührten, Pflanze sey, welche die Botanischen *Rhus Toxicodendron* nennen, und die sie also durch das griechliche Wort lange und deutlich genug mit einer Warnung bezeichnet haben. Sonderbar war ausser der ganzen Erscheinung, der Gang des Uebels, das langsame Fortschreiten des Ausschlags auf einer grossen Oberfläche des Körpers, ohne Fieber. Wie oft mag schon dieser Ausschlag gesehen, aber fur etwas ganz anders gehalten, und selbst von Aerzten verkannt, oder erklärt worden seyn, ohne dass sie oder ihr Kranker an diese Pflanze gedacht haben!”

[A friend of mine, a man of about forty, in the summer, without any preceding vomiting, nausea, fever, etc., was suddenly attacked with a very embarrassing, violent burning and itching eruption, chiefly on the scrotum, the foreskin, the eyelids, and eyes; at the same time there appeared pale swelling on these parts, with small yellowish vesicles, some becoming confluent, moist; after a few days there appeared on the arms and loins solitary blisters, as large as lentils, and opened-up by scratching. Many of these larger pustules or sores, slowly became suppurative, had a red perimeter, became broader, and healed more slowly (in the third week), whilst the smaller confluent pustules dried quickly and were shed in a few days. I can not compare this rash better with any other than with the so-called girdle, or hellish Fire (Cingulum, Zona, Zoster) with the only difference the girdle confines itself, characteristically, to one side of the abdomen, more than half a circle, and associated with fever, whereas this eruption occupies several parts of the body took over, and slowly continued to extend... the patient saw the cause was from a plant in his garden which he had uprooted 24 hours earlier, especially since he was in contact with it with his somewhat wounded fingers ... the botanists call this plant *Rhus toxicodendron*, as designated with the Greek word as a warning]

Hahnemann thus derives the following single lengthy symptom into *Rhus-t.* from this excellent, well-reasoned report of *Wichmann*:

782 Very painful, violently burning and itching eruption, which appeared particularly on the scrotum, prepuce, eyelids and eyes, causing at the same time swelling in these parts, and which consisted of small yellowish vesicles which coalesced here and there, exuded moisture; also single ones on the arms and loins after some days attained the size of lentils, and burst by the scratching of the patient. Many of these larger pustules or ulcers slowly suppurated, had a red areola, became broader, and healed more slowly (in the third week), whilst the smaller confluent pustules dried more rapidly, and in a few days scabbed off. This eruption came on without preliminary vomiting, nausea, or fever, in a healthy man of forty, who four-and twenty hours previously had pulled up a plant of *rhus. tox.* in his garden, consequently had been much in contact with it, one of his fingers having a small wound on it. [W₃₀]

- Z₂ Zadig: *Rhus Toxicodendron* (Giftsumach) als Arzneymittel [*Rhus toxicodendron* (poison ivy) as a medicament], in Hufeland's *Journal*, 1798, vol.5, no.3, p.694. [3 symptoms]

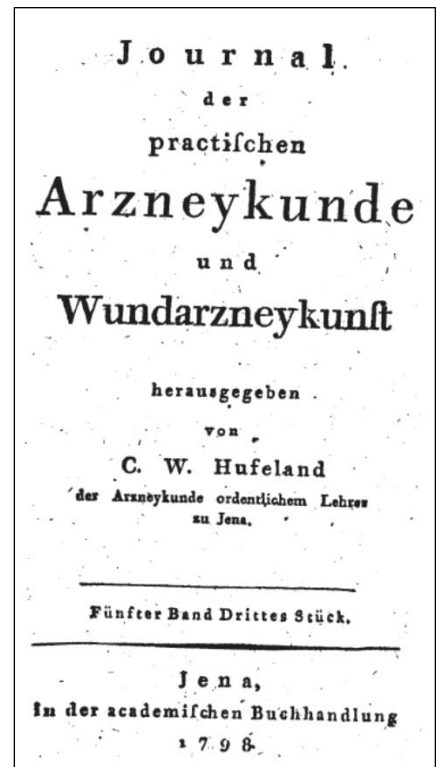
Speaking on his experience using *Rhus toxicodendron*, Zadig writes (p.694):

“Ein schwächlicher junger Mann, der sehr oft von heftigen Koliken mit Verstopfungen geplagt wird, bekam plötzlich eine Lähmung der Ausstreckmuskeln der rechten Hand; er war nicht vermögend die nach innen gezogenen Finger wieder gerade zu machen. Nach vergebnen Gebrauch der gewöhnlichen Mittel erhielt er ½ Gran pro Dosi, täglich dreymal, und als diese, nach einiger Zeit, keine Veränderung im Kranken hervorbrachte, stieg er bis zu einem ganzem Gran, täglich dreymal. Allein der Patient bekam nach etlichen Tagen solche Nervenzufälle, dass er schlechterdings das Mittel nicht mehr nehmen wollte. Er bekam heftigen Schwindel, große Entkräftung, und eine Verwirrung der Sinne, dass er sich am Rande des Grabes zu seyn glaubte. Vielleicht wäre der Erfolg sehr günstig gewesen, wenn der Kranke sich zum fernern Gebrauch hätte entschliessen wollen; ...

[A feeble young man often plagued by strong colic and constipation suddenly developed lameness of the extensor muscles of his right hand; he was unable to straighten the bent fingers. After the usual remedies he received half grain doses [*Rhus tox*], thrice daily, and when there was no change after some time, it was increased to a whole grain, thrice daily. But after several days he suffered such nervous effects that he simply did not want to take the remedy. He felt violent vertigo, great weakness, and such a confusion of the senses that he thought he was on the edge of the grave ...]

Hahnemann recruits the following 3 symptoms from Zadig into our *Rhus* pharmacography:

- 8 Very severe vertigo. [Z₂]
- 789 Very great weakness. [Z₂]
- 971 Confusion of the reason; he thinks he is dying. [Z₂]



- x₄ *Allgemeine medizinische Annalen*, Altenburg, 1811, April, Neuere Erfahrungen über die Wirkung des *rhus radicans* auf die Haut [Recent experience on the effect of *Rhus radicans* on the skin], p.326, from *Neuestes Journal der Erfindungen, Theorien und Widersprüche in der gesammten Medizin* [Latest Journal of Discoveries, Theories and Contradictions in Medicine.], Gotha, vol.1, no.4, pp.400-412. [5 symptoms]

This journal appeared with two title pages, viz.: *Allgemeine Medizinische Annalen*, and *Annalen der Heilkunde* (as cited by Hahnemann). The article on *Rhus tox*. Appears on p.326, with the following footnote:

“anonymisch mitgetheilt in neuesten Journal der Erfindungen, Theorien und Widersprüche in der gesammten Medizin, 1. B. 4. St. S. 400.” [anonymous communication in Journal of the latest inventions, theories and contradictions in the whole of Medicine, vol.1, no.4, p.400]

We find the following original account in the place cited (pp.400-412):

“Bemerkungen über die Wirkung des *rhus radicans* auf der Haut” [Observations on the effects of *Rhus radicans* on the skin]

Daß der Saft von *rhus radicans*, *toxicodendron* und vernix auf der menschlichen Haut einen Ausschlag hervorbringe, daß dieser Ausschlag in China, wo aus dem *rhus vernix* ein Firniß bereitet wird, häufig vorkomme, ist bekannt; doch findet man übel die Natur und den Verlauf dieser Ausschlagskrankheiten, so wie über die Wirkungen des *rhus* unter besondern Umständen nicht viele Beobachtungen aufgezeichnet; es werden daher folgende an mir selbst gemachte Erfahrungen nicht ohne alles Interesse seyn.

Schon einigemal daß ich *rhus radicans* oder Vernix Neugierigen gezeigt und berührt hatte, wurde ich an einer Hand allein, oder auch zugleich im Gesicht von nachher zu beschreibenden Zufällen betroffen. Da ich einen festen, wenig reizbaren Körper habe und vor der Benetzung mit Saft mich hütete, so wollte ich mir es lange selbst nicht gestehn, daß jene Zufälle vom dem *rhus* herrührten,



zumal da ich mehreremal von andern und von mir selbst den Strauch anfassen, anbinden, einschneiden sahe, ohne daß merkbare Folgen entstanden. Mit der Zeit aber lernte ich einsehen, daß die Giftigkeit des Strauchs zu verschiedenen Zeiten bald starker bald schwächer war. Am wirksamsten ist sie im Spätsommer, im September und October, und des Morgens; ohne Zweifel weil in dieser Jahreszeit die Säfte, des Gewächses am meisten ausgearbeitet und concentrirt, und früh am häufigsten angesammelt sind, auch stärker ausgeathmet werden; und weil des. Morgens der menschliche Körper am fähigsten ist, durch äußere Eindrücke afficirt zu werden: so wie ich bei Versuchen an mir selbst gefühlt habe, daß in der Reconvalescenz vom Wechselfieber die Schädlichkeiten die das Recidiv hervorrufen, in den Morgenstunden um 9. 10. 11. am meisten einwirken, während sie des Nachmittags weit weniger thun.

Der milchende Saft des *rhus radicans* auf die Haut gebracht, wo er sehr schnell eintrocknet und einen schwarzen Fleck zurückläßt, wie der Saft vieler milchenden Gewächse wie *taraxacum*, *sonchus*, zeigte folgende Wirkungen. Ein kleines Tröpfchen auf den Rücken meiner Hand trocknete höchst schnell ein, nach ein paar Tagen entstand ein Kreis von Blasen ohngefähr einen Zoll im Durchmesser. Die Blasen waren klein und vertrockneten bald. Ein paar Blätter auf die Hand gereiben verursachten nach ein paar Tagen heftigen Blasenausschlag mit grossen Blasen auf der Hand, und Anschwellung des ganzen Armes bis an den Elbogen. Herrn S. in B. verursachte die Beneblung der Hand mit Saft eine Aufschwellung des Leibes. Im Garten zu J. schnitt Jemand Aeste und Blätter vom Strauche ab, indem er einen lebernen Handschuh an hatte, der Handschuh wurde durchnässt, die Hand benetzt und wahrscheinlich beim Uriniren die Harnröhre berührt. Es erfolgte ein fürchterlicher Ausschlag, Verschwellung der Harnröhre und der Tod.

Die bloße Ausdünstung des Strauches scheint bloß auf das Gesicht zu wirken; sie verursachte in der Nähe mir ein paar mal Rose und Anschwellung des Gesichtes und Halses, so weit diese bloß und unbedeckt sind, bis an die Haare. In der Ferne von einigen drei Schritten an einem warmern Sommermorgen, da ich ihr eine halbe Stunde ausgesetzt war, Anschwellung der Nase und Lippen, die sich jedoch in einem Tage ohne Abschuppung der Haut verlor. Der Dunst von den gequetschten Blättern ist widrig und verursachte mir von einer einzigen starken Inspiration Anschwellung der Nase bis an die Nasenwurzel.

Nachdem ich schon Mehrere dergleichen Erfahrungen gemacht hatte, wurde das Kraut *rhus* für einen apoplektischen Kranken auf dem Lande gesodert; der Bote, der es gleich mitnehmen wollte, mußte schnell abgefertigt werden; ich ging also an einem heitern Septembermorgen nach Tagesanbruch an den Strauch, schnitt in darüber gebückter Stellung eine Menge Aeste und Zweige so vorsichtig, als es mir die sehr beschränkte Zeit, da ich sehr früh verreisen mußte, erlaubte, ab, hatte aber demum geachtet einige Tröpfchen Milchsaft auf die linke und rechte Hand bekommen, dagegen weder Gesicht noch sonst einen Theil benetzt. Die Tropfen waren sogleich eingetrocknet und ließen sich weder durch Flußwasser noch durch Seifenwasser wegbringen. Gegend Abend bemerkte ich eine Spannung in den Lippen. Am zweiten Morgen waren Lippe und Nase etwas aufgeschwollen und diese Anschwellung verbreitete sich allmählich über das ganze Gesicht; war aber nur wenig roth, so wie überhaupt das Ganze keine ächte Rose schien. Den dritten Tag nahm Geschwulst, Spannung und das Gefühl von Brennen zu, und verbreitete sich über das ganze Gesicht und die Ohren, bis an den behaarten Theil des Kopfes, die Augenlieder waren sehr geschwollen, die Augen fast verschlossen, thränten. Den vierten und fünften Tag zeigten sich hier und da kleine mit einer gelblichen Lymphe gefüllte Bläschen, die leicht aufplatzten und wenig näßten. Im vorigen Jahr bei ähnlicher Affektion ging mehr von jener gelben Lymphe ab. Vom fünften Tage an fiel die Geschwulst allmählich, doch langsam, und zwischen dem Kinne und dem hintern Winkel der untern Kinnlade blieb die Geschwulst länger, bis zum achten Tage, und noch länger dauerte die Anschwellung unter dem Kinne, wobei jedoch die Drüsen nicht, sondern bloß das Zellgewebe angelaufen war. Die Haut schuppte sich in Gestalt weißer Kleien ab.

Zu gleicher Zeit mit der Geschwulst des Gesichtes entstand bloß sympathisch und ohne daß die geringste Berührung mit dem Sumachsafte oder den von diesem befleckten Handflächen statt gefunden hätte. Brennen, Jucken und blasier (wegen Dünne der Haut) sehr stark nässender Ausschlag an der untern und hintern Hälfte des Scrotums, wobei die, vor Bemerkung dieses Umstandes und vor Anlegung eines Suspensoriums, mit der aus dem Scrotum schwitzenden Lymphe getroffenen Stellen der Schenkel hochroth und mit kleinen wenig juckenden Bläschen besetzt waren. (Dieß war die einzige Stelle wo die aus den Blasen ausschwitzende Lymphe auf frischer Haut Erosion verursachte; an den Händen geschahe es nicht.) Dieser Ausschlag dauerte bis zur Abtrocknung und Abschuppung nur vier Tage; hinterließ aber noch Empfindung von Jucken, so daß ich mehrere male einen neuen Ausschlag der Art befürchtete. Zugleich schwoll das Präputium und selbst die Spitze der Eichel ödematös auf, blieb so sechs Tage lang, und beide erhielten ihre natürliche Beschaffenheit wieder, ohne daß eine Abschuppung der Haut merklich gewesen wäre.

Etwas später als die Gesichtsgeschwulst entl. standen an der innern Seite beider Kniee rothe brennende Flecken und Striemen (fast wie Zoster, nur kürzer und kleiner,) auf denen kleine Blassen entstanden, welche nach 4 bis 5 Tagen aus trockneten.

Die wenigen Tropfen Saft, welche auf die Hände gekommen waren, bewirkten nun den eigentl. lichen Blasenausschlag. Am dritten Tage nach, der Vergiftung entstand das Gefühl von Brennen auf den Rücken der Hände und Finger. Es erhoben sich eine Menge Blasen von der Größe einer kleinen Erbse bis zu der einer Haselnuß, auf dem Gelenke der Handwurzeln aber war die ganze Fläche mit kleinen Bläschen von der Größe eines Hirsenkorns besetzt; dabei die Hand etwas angeschwollen, wenig beweglich und wenig roth; auch verursachte der Druck mit dem Finger nur wenig Weißwerden der Haut. Heftiges Brennen und Spannen, unter den größern Blasen, Brennen und

Druck waren die Empfindungen, die diese Zufälle begleiteten. Am sechsten Tage waren die Blasen auf und zwischen den Fingern ausgebildet, hie und da zusammengefloßsen, von der Größe von Kaffeebohnen und Haselnüssen, daneben aber auch kleinere, und mußten, des Brennens wegen und auch um sie nicht durch Zufall aufstoßen zu lassen, aufgestochen werden; eine durchsichtige Lymphe floß aus, aber bald nach dem Ausflusse füllten sich die Blasen von neuem mit einer in Geschmack und Auflöslichkeit im Wasser ähnlichen, aber dicken, gelben, im Ansehn fast eiterartigen Flüssigkeit, die täglich zwei, dreimal die Blasen wieder anfüllte. Statt daß bei frühern Vergiftungen in vergangenen Jahren diese Blasen bald trocken wurden, so blieben sie dießmal lange (jede über acht Tage, manche 12 Tage) stehen, gaben anfangs dicke, dann dünnere Flüssigkeit, bekamen blaurothe, angeschwollene und schmerzende Ränder, während in ihrer Mitte die Haut wenig gespannt und eben war. Wo die äußere Luft weniger Zutritt hatte und die Haut immer trocken erhalten konnte, zwischen den Fingern, wurde die Haut ganz gebleicht, aufgelöst und macerirt mit faulem Geruch. Auch nahm die Flüssigkeit an mehrern Orten einen fauligen Geruch an.”

[That the juice of *rhus radicans*, *toxicodendron*, and *vernix* produces an eruption on the human skin, that this eruption is common in China, where a lacquer is prepared from *rhus vernix*, is well known; but not many observations are recorded on the disturbing nature and course of these eruptions, as well as the effects of *Rhus* under particular circumstances; the following experiments, which I have made myself, will therefore not be without interest.

Several times that I had handled and presented *rhus radicans* or *vernix* to curious people, I was afflicted on one hand alone, or at the same time on the face by effects to be described later. Since I have a robust body that is not very reactive and was careful not to get wet with sap, I did not want to admit to myself that these effects were due to *rhus*, especially as I had myself, and seen others, touching, tying up, and cutting the shrub several times without any noticeable consequences. With time, however, I came to understand the variability of its poisonousness at different times, now stronger, now weaker. It is most powerful in late summer, in September and October, and in the morning; no doubt because at this time of the year the juices of the plant are most developed and concentrated, and most frequently accumulated early, and are more strongly emanated; and because in the morning the human body is most capable of being affected by external impressions: just as I have felt in experiments on myself, that in the convalescence from intermittent fever the harmful factors which cause the relapse have the greatest impact in the morning hours around 9, 10, 11, while they are far less troublesome in the afternoon.

The milky sap of *rhus radicans* applied to the skin, where it dries up very quickly and leaves a black stain, like the sap of many milky growths such as *taraxacum*, *cowthistle*, exhibited the following effects. A small droplet on the back of my hand dried up very quickly, and after a few days there appeared vesicles in a circle about an inch in diameter. The blisters were small and soon dried up. A few leaves rubbed on the hand caused, after a few days, a severe vesicular eruption with large blisters on the hand, and swelling of the whole arm up to the elbow. For Mr. S. in B. sprinkling his hand with juice caused swelling of the body. In J.'s garden, someone cut branches and leaves from the bush while wearing a leather glove. The glove was soaked, the hand became wet and probably touched the urethra when urinating. This followed a frightful eruption, swelling of the urethra, and death.

The mere vapour of the bush seems to affect only the face; in proximity it has a few times caused erysipelas and swelling of my face and neck, insofar as these were exposed and uncovered, up to the hair. Within a distance of three steps on a warm summer morning, after half an hour's exposure, swelling of the nose and lips, which, however, went away in a day without desquamation of the skin. The vapour from the crushed leaves is offensive and caused my nose to swell up to the bridge from a single strong inspiration.

After several such experiences, the herb *rhus* was ordered for an apoplectic patient in the country; the messenger who wanted to take it with him right away had to be dispatched quickly; So on a clear September morning, after daybreak, I went to the bush and, bending over it, cut off a number of branches and twigs as carefully as the very limited time allowed, though I got a few drops of milky juice on my hands, I did not wet my face nor any other part. The drops dried up immediately and could not be removed by either river water or soapy water. Towards evening I noticed tension in my lips. On the second morning the lip and nose were somewhat swollen, and this swelling gradually spread over the face; but was only a little red, just as the whole thing did not seem like a real erysipelas. On the third day the swelling, tension, and burning sensation increased and spread over the whole face and ears up to the hairy part of the head, the eyelids were very swollen, eyes almost closed, weeping. On the fourth and fifth day small vesicles filled with yellowish lymph appeared here and there, which burst easily and oozed little. In the previous year, with a similar affection, more of the yellow lymph was discharged. From the fifth day the swelling subsided gradually, but slowly, but between the chin and the angle of the lower jaw the swelling remained longer, until the eighth day, and the swelling under the chin even longer, although the glands were not affected. The skin flaked off in the form of white bran.]

The swelling of the face appeared sympathetically and without the slightest contact with either the *rhus* sap or the palms which were stained by it. Burning, itching and vesicular (because of the thinness of the skin) profusely oozing rash on the lower and back half of the scrotum, whereby the parts of the thighs touched by the oozing lymph, were covered with small, slightly itching vesicles. (This was the only place where the lymph exuding from the vesicles caused erosion on fresh skin; it did not happen on the hands). This rash lasted only four days until it dried and disappeared, but it still left a sensation of itching, so that I feared a new rash of the same kind several times. At the

same time, the prepuce and even the tip of the glans were œdematous for six days, then both regained their natural texture, without any noticeable desquamation.

A little later than the swelling of the face, red burning spots and welts (almost like zoster, only shorter and smaller) appeared on the inner side of both knees, on which small vesicles developed, which dried up after 4 or 5 days. The few drops of juice that got on my hands now caused the actual vesicles. On the third day after the poisoning, there was a burning sensation on the backs of the hands and fingers. Numerous vesicles, the size of a small pea to that of a hazelnut, appeared, but the whole surface at the wrist was covered with small vesicles the size of a grain of millet; the hand somewhat swollen, not very flexible and not very red, and pressing with the finger caused little whitening of the skin. Violent burning and tightness; beneath the larger vesicles there was burning and pressure. By the sixth day the vesicles had formed on and between the fingers, coalescing to the size of coffee beans and hazelnuts here and there, but also smaller ones, and had to be pierced because of the burning and to prevent them from being burst open accidentally; a transparent lymph flowed out, but the blisters quickly refilled with a liquid similar in taste and dissolvability in water, but thick, yellow, almost pus-like in appearance, which again refilled two or three times a day. Instead of these blisters quickly drying up as in previous poisonings in years past, this time they stayed for a long time (each more than eight days, some 12 days), gave off thick, then thinner fluid, had bluish-red, swollen and painful edges, whilst in their centre the skin was a little taut and level [flat]. Between the fingers the skin was quite pale, dissolved and macerated with a foul odour, and the discharge also took on a putrid odor in several places.]

The article goes on to discuss the various (allopathic) treatments taken. From this lengthy yet informative account Hahnemann recruits the following symptoms into our *Rhus tox.* Pharmacography:

101 Erysipelatous swelling [Rosenartige Anschwellung] of the face and neck. [x₄]¹

¹ From the vapours of the plant

113 Swelling of the lips and nose, then pale swelling of the face; the third day the facial swelling increased, with burning pain, the eyelids closed by swelling, the eyes watering; the fourth and fifth days the face was studded with vesicles full of yellow water, which burst and let out a little water; the swelling of the face lasted eight days, that under the chin longer; it desquamated like bran. [x₄]²

² From wetting the hands with the sap

450 Frightful eruption on the genitals, closure of the urethra by swelling. (And death) [x₄]³

³ From smearing the hands with the juice, and probably touching the genitals with it

451 A profusely exuding eruption on the scrotum and swelling of the prepuce and glans penis. [x₄]⁴

⁴ From smearing the hands with the juice

677 On the inside of both knees red burning spots and streaks, with small blisters that soon dry up. [x₄]

— τέλος —

*

Francis Adams

The Seven Books of Paulus Ægineta,
London, 1844, vol.1, p.viii:

“... I have made it an invariable rule never to quote at second-hand, nor to make any reference to the opinions of an author whose works I have not myself carefully examined.”