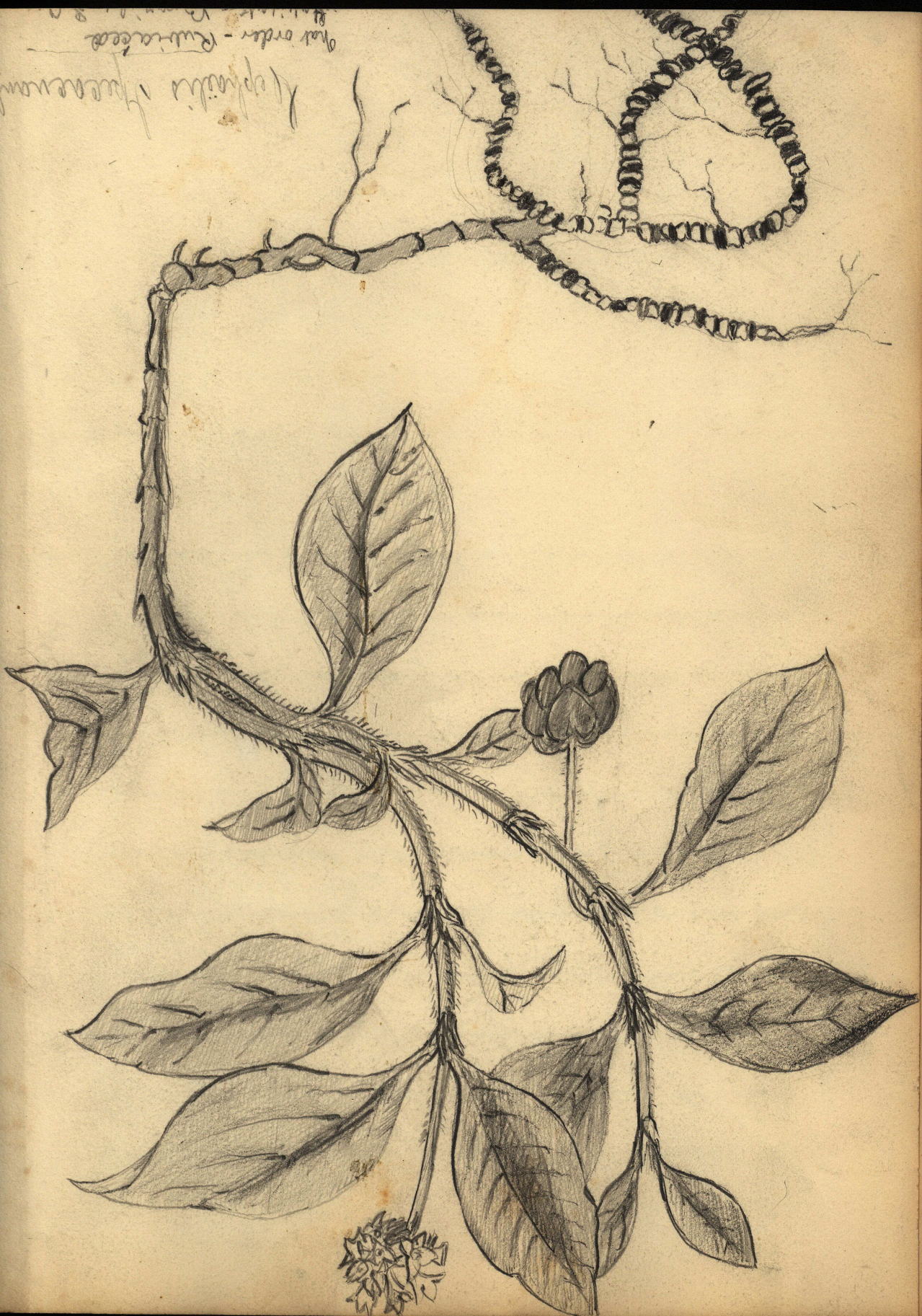


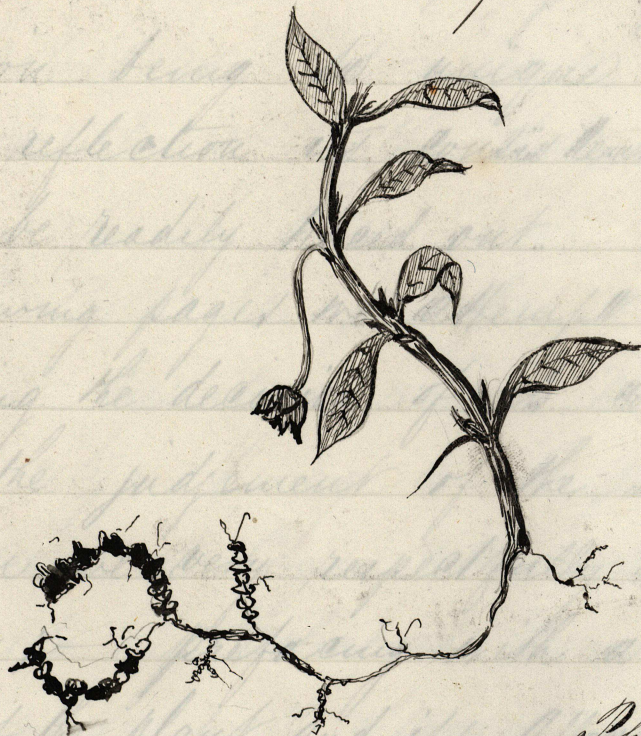
Myrica *fluviatilis*
Order - Rubiaceae



Thesis on
Specaouanka.

Respectfully submitted
to the Faculty of the Homoeopathic
Medical College of Pennsylvania

by
Henry Thomas
of Chester England.



Philadelphia
February 1855.

Speacuanha.

Few medicines offer more encouragement to the student of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica than Speacuanha. The range of its action being so unique that with due reflection its consistent course may be readily traced out. In the following pages we attempt this analysis leaving the decision of its correctness to the judgement of the Faculty to whom we very respectfully submit our essay;— prefacing with a brief history of the plant and its Allopathic uses.

Specauaha first used in the Brazils
 as a domestic remedy for dysentery
 was introduced into France in the
 year 1686 by Jean Adrian Helvetius
 who received it from his preceptor
 Afforty, to whom it was given, as a
 token of gratitude, by a former patient
 of Afforty's; with the information that
 it was a valuable remedy in dysentery.

Helvetius after several successful
 experiments with the drug placarded
 the walls of Paris with the welcome
 news that he possessed a specific
 against dysentery which then infested
 that city; Owing to its prevalence at
 the court of Louis XIV and to the
 placards of Helvetius several experiments
 were made with Speac^a in the Hotel Dieu

which being successful, were the means
of bringing this article into conspicu-
ity in the history of medicine &
of making famous its possessor.

Notwithstanding descriptions of the
root had been given two years prior
to its use by Helvetius it was not
certainly known until the year 1800
when Dr Gomes brought it from the
Brazil. — In the Allopathic
school Spica is used in spasmodic
asthma whooping cough, in which cases
Dr Kense has shown that it proved
equally serviceable even when it fails
to produce vomiting and merely produces
nausea!, — mucous catarrh, bronchial
hemorrhage, "indigestion", dysentery,
in this disease it does not possess

the confidence of Allopaths to the extent
which it formerly did; Pereira observes
"In severe forms of this disease no one,
I suspect, now would think of relying
on it as his principal remedy; but, as
an auxiliary, its efficacy is not to be
* denied.") - Chronic visceral enlargements,
diarrhea, acute rheumatism. Leste
in his *Materia Medica* mentions also
"leucorrhoea acuta antiqua inveterata,
catarrh of old people, laryngitis, inter-
mittent and puerperal fever" he also
quotes from the French *Materia Medica*
of Goussard and Pidoux the following
"Experience shows that almost all
the dangerous symptoms which occur
during confinement yield to Ipecacuan-
ha; we mention this not on the strength

* The above quotation is very similar to the
statement made by Leste in the *Homoeopathic remedy*

of books, but of what we have seen and done. For five years past we have constantly attended at the Hôtel Dieu sixty women in confinement; we have never failed to give every woman who had been recently confined a dose of quinine; no matter with what derangement she might have been affected, and we can affirm that we have never seen the least trouble arise from this practice, on the contrary, in most cases, we have either effected a cure or a perceptible improvement.

----- Proceeding to the pathogenesis of this remedial agent we notice primarily its action upon the tissues of the body that is to say the bronchial

or bronchial & stomachic few medicines

to study the power of
infusing Skin. as this
Gold sweat of the hands and feet.

Night sweat - pricking pains in various
parts of the body excited by motion
and terminating in burning pains
suppressed rash. Rash of lymph in females

Red itching spots on the chest, burning
after scratching. Uvula and adenoids

Ulcers on the foot with a black base
parchment-like dryness of the skin
in hectic fever. Irritating peculiarity
of constitution. She has been much
in the habit

Mucous membranes.

The most remarkable effect of this
drug is upon the mucous membranes
particularly those of the bronchi
or bronchia & stomach few medicines

So clearly exhibit the power of
infinitesimal doses as this. As
the following example - one of many -
shows * "The first of these cases is
that of a lady, now about fifty,
the wife of a surgeon, and mother
of a numerous family. The general
state of health has always been good
her disposition lively and active,
and by no means possessing anything
of that valetudinarian irritability
which marks striking peculiarity
of constitution. She has been much
in the habit, when the hurry of
business required it, of assisting her
husband in dispensing medicines.
This gave rise to her first discovery
of the effects of Speeracantha on her

* Dr Hamilton's Med & Phys Journal, April 1816 Vol 23 p 318 quoted by
Dr W. Thomson in his treatise on "The Small dose of S. Hordisomath."

habit. I had an opportunity of remarking this fact about eighteen months ago, being on a professional visit at her house, while her husband labored under a severe fever. She was about to dispense one of my prescriptions in which some *Specaeuanka* had been ordered, and the moment she saw what the composition was, she ran from the shop to a distant part of the house, refusing to dispense it.

This excited my curiosity to find the cause. On following her she explained it, and with some degree of anxiety looked round, lest some of the doors between her and the shop should have been left

open while the prescription was about
to be dispensed. As my stay was
protracted some days, I had occasion
to see these fears repeatedly excited,
One forenoon in particular, while
she was in the kitchen, a consider-
able distance from the shop, two
paper doors being between herself
and it, while she could neither
see nor know beforehand, that
Speacnauka, which was the case,
was weighing, she called out with
vehemence to have the doors closed,
on account of the sensations she
was beginning to feel. — — —

The action of Speac upon the
muscles as upon the skin and
other membranes seems to be first

an increase of their function with
its corresponding decrease mucous
being at first plentifully exuded
plasma formed + finally dryness
superbony.

Coryza with stoppage of the nose
lips covered with aphthae

Yellowish or white coating of the tongue
Vomitings of large quantities of mucous
from the stomach. Enteritis (?)
Colic & Green stool. Stool

covered with red bloody mucus.

Crawling in the anus as of ascarides

Stinging cutting burning pains in
the margin of the anus (as in
muceterate hemorrhoids) prothetical:

Bloody urine.

Hematemesis - the prothetical

Action upon Serous Membranes

Short paroxysms of fine & violently stinging pains
in the head, increasing to an aching

increase of
of the Arteries

Vertigo &c

decrease of action

Chilliness

decrease of action of the spinal ar.

Heat & Fever, antagonistic to the chill,

in arach ?

Sensation as if the femur would be
dislocated on sitting down

want of
action

Pains in the knee as if the tendons and
ligaments had been wearied by fatigue.

the sero
tipue of
synovial
membr

Cracking in the joints.

That the above symptoms are due to
hyper action & want of action in the
serous membranes is hypothetical:

opening as fact (that which is not yet
proved) that the serous membranes

have the capability and office to produce and preserve a vacuum - one of the evidences to this conclusion is the fact of their being shut sacs another that if in a dead body the air be allowed to enter the acetabulum the femur is dislocated but if the vacuum be produced by an air pump the head of the femur will return and (as long as there is a vacuum) remain in the cavity: - a similar fact is stated in Carpenter's 1st Edition 1852 pp 511 from the 4th to the 11th line -

effects on the glands

- Copious secretion of Saliva
- Hum in the external canthi of the eyes
- Hard hearing of the right ear with pressure
- Spitting of green mucous & of pitch like substance
- Stitches in the left hypochondria

(upward of stomach)

query from West's work

The effect of *Guaiacum* upon the nerves is by our brethren of the Allopathic ranks almost entirely confined to the eighth pair of nerves in fact so far does this idea engage their attention that *Sundelin* ascribes its effect on the pulmonary tissue to hyper action of the eighth pair of nerves - *Perina* ascribes the vomiting to the agency of the same nerves & not to affection of the mucous ^{membrane of the stomach:} - which assumption, if there is any truth in the effects of this medicine on the mucous membranes as stated in Allopathic as well as Homeopathic works is incorrect - Still *Guaiacum* unquestionably affects the nerves - but its action is not limited to the eighth pair as the following symptoms will readily show. Empyroticous. Opisthotous.

Rigid stretching of the whole body followed
by a spasmodic jerking of the arms to-
wards one another. Convulsive movements
of the facial muscles. Pain in the
teeth as if they would be torn out
(paroxysms) Cramps in the scapulae &
hips. Convulsive twitchings in the lower
limbs. Spasmodic asthma.

Spasmodic asthma also affects the circulatory
apparatus altho like its action upon
the membranes the symptoms show but
an increase & decrease in the function-
al activity of the blood vessels e.g.

Palpitation of the heart without anxiety
External coldness and internal heat

Sudden attacks of heat

Night sweat - Hands & feet dripping with
Cold sweat - sweating

Notwithstanding Homoeopathy forbids
 the application of remedies to certain
 diseases only, still many medicines,
 and this as a type, hold a distinct
 place in various maladies; hence
 we find *Specaenaka* curative in
 certain forms of Croup, pneumonia,
 diarrhoea. *asthma* &c in consequence
 of its similarity to these morbid man-
 ifestations. — The practice which
 obtains among Allopathists of using
Speac in childhood may be owing
 to its action upon the excitatory
 or reflex system of nerves — e. g.

1 See See to
 Mat. Med
 Art. Spe

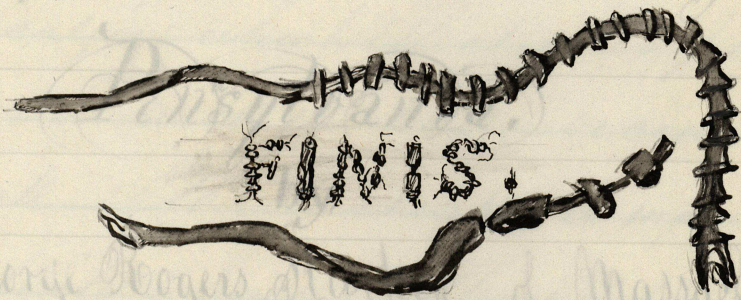
- Spasmodic contractive sensation in
 the throat and chest — Vomiting &c
- Cough produced by irritation
- Frequent sneezing

Note. (quoting from Tyler Smith's work on Obstetrics pp 168. 17th line
 "this physiological connection between the cardia and the
 stomach is the basis of the treatment of vomiting of pregnancy")

Cough with retching - Nausea with hic-
cough disappearing after several stools &c

The above together with the well
known influence of the remedy in
complaints common to the female
organism and its applicability in
diseases characterized by their intensi-
ty and short duration - offer strong
reasons for the use of the drug in
Homoeopathic obstetrical practice. -

- - - of there is any truth
in the "doctrine of signatures" Cephaelis
Ipecacuanha should be the grand vom.
Specific ^{W. H. W.}



George Rogers School of Massachusetts
1854-55